

Hafa Adai!

6 Skymark charters on March 22. **PAGE 2**

OPA, OAG's help sought on allowance issue. **PAGE 6**

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Tropical Storm Condition 3

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth was placed on Tropical Storm Condition 3 as of 1pm yesterday as Typhoon Wutip continues to whirl toward the Marianas.

Tropical Storm Condition 3 means that damaging winds of 39-73 miles per hour are possible within 48 hours.

Fortunately, Typhoon Wutip's path remains as forecasted—west—and is still seen to pass south of Guam by Sunday.

Expected winds in the CNMI are about 30-49 with gusts of 40-64 mph. Expected damage include some dead limbs and a few green palm fronds, light damage to poorly constructed buildings, damage to signs along

See STORM on Page 4

RELATED NEWS

► Storm conditions seen within 48 hours. **PAGE 3**

► High surf, high risk for rip currents until Wednesday. **PAGE 13**

Propst: Another questionable purchase

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

House minority leader Rep. Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan) is again asking the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to explain why an emergency purchase contract was awarded to a winning bidder that was connected to a similar deal that raised a lot of red



Propst

flags almost two years ago.

Propst told *Saipan Tribune* that International Bridge and Construction Marianas Inc. was the winning bidder for a generator that will be shipped and installed on Rota, where the CUC board of directors had declared an emergency to create reserve power.

See PROPST on Page 4

Kilili to push for Marianas language in new immigration bill

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilil C. Sablan (Ind-MP) would be pushing for the inclusion of language that would grant long-term guest workers CNMI-only residence legal status

in an immigration reform bill being drafted by a bipartisan group in the 116th U.S. Congress.

The new measure would essentially mirror S. 744, or the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act, that

See KILILI on Page 4



The Saipan Mayor's Office started disassembling temporary tents yesterday in anticipation of Typhoon Wutip. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

'TETRIS tents capable of withstanding Wutip'

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The tents installed under the Temporary Emergency Tent and Roofing Installation Support program are capable of withstanding the tropical storm force winds expected

RELATED NEWS

► TETRIS tents disassembled to get ready for typhoon. **PAGE 5**

from Typhoon Wutip, but the CNMI government has decided to dismantle them as a precautionary measure.

The CNMI government has released teams to help the public in dismantling the tents that serve as temporary shelters.

See TETRIS on Page 4

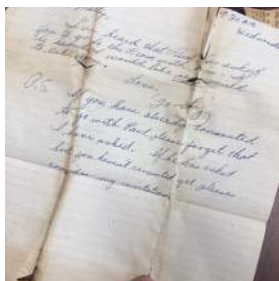
INSIDE



LOCAL

The allocation of the \$1-million donation of TanHoldings Corp. and the Tan Siu Lin Foundation is finalized.

PAGE 8



OFF THE WALL

A purse lost in the 1950s will be returned to its now 82-year-old owner.

PAGE 24



LIFE & STYLE

"Empire" actor Jussie Smollett is charged with making a false police report.

PAGE 25



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Local

6 Skymark charters on March 22

Japanese low-cost carrier Skymark Airlines Inc. will launch six direct charter flights from Tokyo to Saipan on March 22, a development that the Marianas Visitors Authority described as "exciting" for the CNMI as it will be the start of the increase in tourist arrivals from Japan.

MVA managing director Christopher Concepcion disclosed yesterday that Skymark will also launch additional flights in April and May for Japanese Golden Week.

Concepcion said Skymark is expected to launch their regular scheduled flights in July. "We're very excited about the resumption of flights from Japan to Saipan," he said.

The MVA managing director said they expect a slight increase in arrivals from Japan after these initial flights.

When daily flights launch

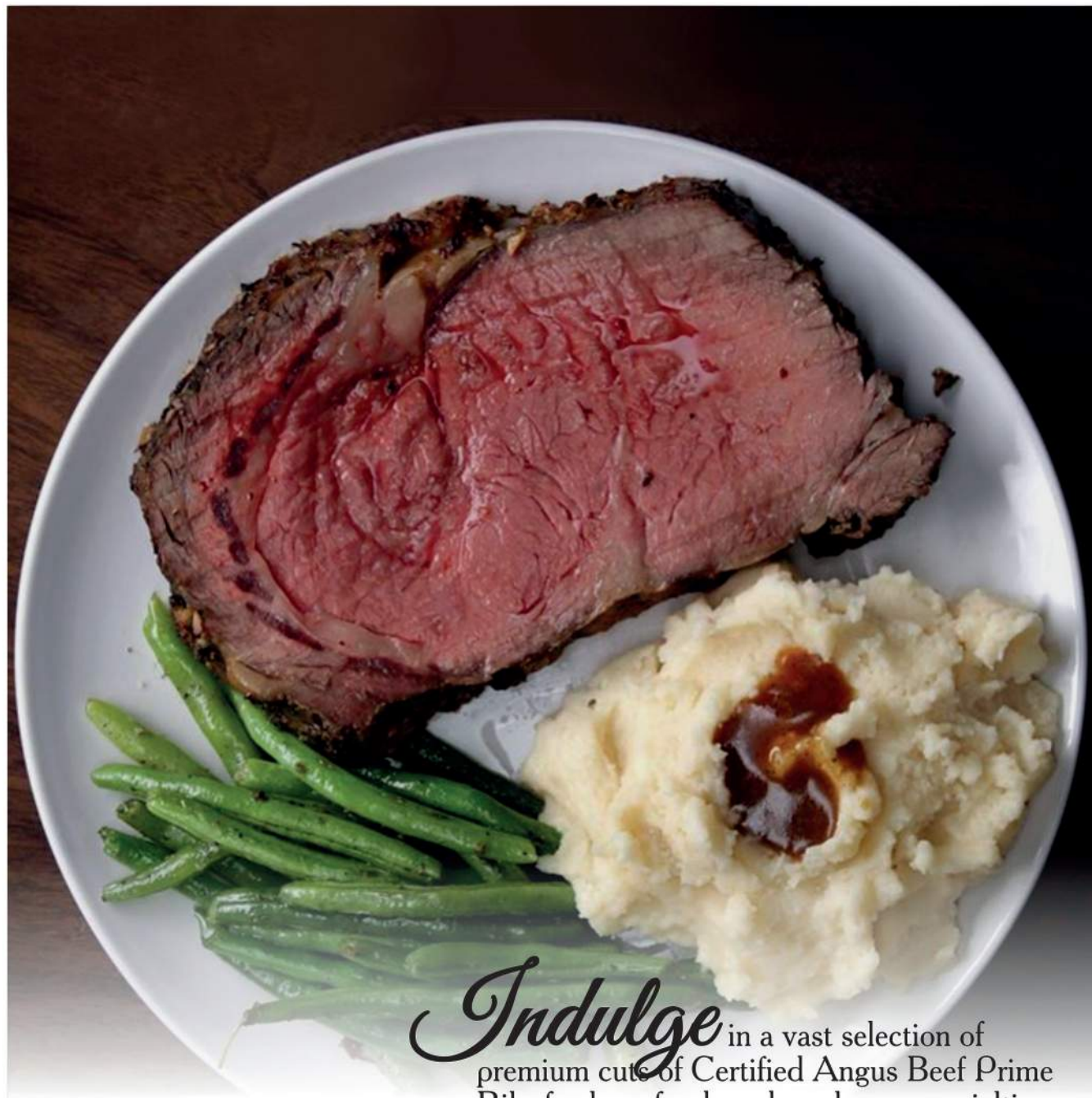
in July, Concepcion said, they expect a significant increase in arrivals from Japan.

"It's been a long, drawn out back-and-forth discussion with Skymark and we're finally almost here. We're very glad," he said.

Last month, Skymark donated 3 million Japanese yen or about \$30,000 to MVA for the CNMI's recovery efforts from Super Typhoon Yutu's devastation.

The CNMI government and Skymark had signed a co-promotional agreement that would re-open direct flights between Japan and Saipan.

Skymark is Japan's third largest carrier and the first low-cost carrier in Japan. It is also the only carrier that offers domestic flights based at Haneda International Airport in Ota, Tokyo. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*



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WUTIP UPGRADED TO TYPHOON

Storm conditions seen within 48 hours

The CNMI State Warning Point, in coordination with the National Weather Service and Guam Weather Forecast Office, continues to monitor what is now Typhoon Wutip.

Currently, a Tropical Storm Watch remains in effect for Guam, Rota, Tinian, and Saipan. That means tropical storm conditions including damaging winds of 39 mph or more are possible within the next 48 hours.

As of 1pm, the center of Typhoon Wutip was located near 6.5 degrees north latitude and 150.0 degrees east longitude, placing Wutip about 660 miles south-southeast of Saipan and 600 miles southeast of Guam. Wutip is moving west-northwest at 13 mph and is expected to make a slight turn toward the northwest with little change in forward speed over the next 24 hours.

Maximum sustained winds have increased to 75 mph and is forecast to intensify through Friday night. Typhoon force winds extend outward from the center up to 35 miles while tropical storm force winds extend outward from the center up to 165 miles south of the center and 115 miles north.

The closest point of approach for the islands of Saipan and Tinian are expected to be late Sunday morning at 250 miles southwest and 200 miles southwest of Rota early Sunday morning. Predicted maximum sustained winds for Saipan and Tinian are 30 to 35 mph with gusts up to 45 mph, and 35 to 40 mph for Rota with gusts up to 45-50 mph.

It is important that residents remain in tune with local media to receive the latest up-

dates on Typhoon Wutip.

Residents in tents

As of end of business day yesterday, the CNMI government has set up a hotline for those needing assistance with securing their tents. Residents may contact 664-9083 to be placed on the schedule. To increase efficiency of security, families living in tents are highly encouraged to disassemble their tents if they are capable of doing so to alleviate Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services personnel and dispatched teams to assist those most in need of immediate aid.

It is also important to note that personnel assigned to secure tents are unable to move or remove personal property from the residents' premises. It remains the responsibility of each household to secure their personal belongings prior to dismantle crews showing up onsite. Households with personal property still located in tents may be skipped to assist families who have cleared their areas. Please keep in mind, the CNMI installed an approximate total of 1,900 tents in the wake of Super Typhoon Yutu. The goal is to assist as many families as possible.

Public transportation and shelter information

The Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority is also available to provide transportation to residents who require assistance in relocating to the nearest shelter. Residents may contact the COTA Dispatch at 664-2690 or 285-2683.

As of now, the Kagman Emergency Shelter Facility is open to accepting residents requiring immediate shelter.

Several facilities remain on standby should the need to open more shelters arise.

Prepare to prepare

Now is the time to act. Residents should review their preparedness plans and be ready to implement them should a Warning be issued for the CNMI. Although the CNMI is not expecting much rain throughout Wutip, it is always advisable to clear drainage areas so as to better prepare in the event conditions unexpectedly change. Check your generators to ensure operability in case of power loss, and ensure your family has enough drinking water and non-potable water to flush toilets and for hygiene purposes. Gas your vehicles.

Damaging winds are possible across the Marianas starting early Saturday morning. Secure any debris that may have been left by Super Typhoon Yutu. Check typhoon shutters to ensure they are in current working condition.

Assist your neighbors if they are in need of assistance.

Storm surge and surf information

Combined seas of 9 to 11 feet will start building higher today, Friday, reaching 10 to 12 feet and then between 15 to 20 feet on Saturday and Saturday night. Inundation of 2 to 4 feet is possible by Satur-

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and seas have subsided.

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ralphdlg.torres/>

- CNMI Joint Information Center: <https://www.facebook.com/JICNMI/>
- HSEM also encourages residents to download HSEM's *readyCNMI* App available for FREE in the Apple Store or Google Play-Store to receive the latest weather updates and notifications. (PR)

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TETRIS

From Page 1

According to CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management Office spokesperson Nadine Deleon Guerrero, although the tents installed under the TETRIS program were built to withstand tropical storm force winds, the CNMI government is taking precautionary measures to protect these tents just in case.

Guerrero said that although these tents don't necessarily need to be dismantled, the CNMI government is aware that many are still traumatized by Super Typhoon Yutu and are worried for their temporary homes.

Deleon Guerrero said groups from the Saipan Mayor's Office and the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services were deployed since 11am yesterday to help dismantle tents for



The Saipan Mayor's Office started disassembling temporary tents yesterday in anticipation of Typhoon Wutip.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

families who cannot dismantle them on their own.

Deleon Guerrero said that because there are 1,800 tents installed on Saipan and they only have today left to dismantle them, they are asking for the cooperation of tent owners.

Deleon Guerrero said that dismantling groups would be driving around villages but Homeland Security aims to prioritize callers and those who are not able or do not know how to dismantle the tent themselves. Homeland Security is requesting tent

owners who really need help to call their hotline.

"The CNMI government has set up a hotline for those needing assistance with securing their tents. Residents may contact 664-9083 to be placed on the schedule. To increase efficiency of security, families

STORM

From Page 1

the road, damage to canopies, leaves, and very strong rip currents.

The Marianas is urged to prepare for winds of 50-73 mph with gusts of 65-94 mph. The Marianas is also urged to prepare for major damage to huts made of loosely attached corrugated sheet metal and plywood, spotty power outages and some damage to secondary power lines, downed trees and limbs, inundation of 1-2 feet on windward coasts, and deadly rip currents.

Worst conditions are expected on Saturday night to Sunday morning as Wutip is forecasted to become a Category 3 typhoon with winds of up to 120 mph and gusts up to 145 mph in its closest point

of approach.

Flood watch

Heavy rain is possible as Typhoon Wutip passes south of Guam. Bands of heavy rain showers are possible for Guam and Rota.

Based on information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, and compiled at CNMI Emergency Operations Center-State Warning Point, a flash flood watch will be in effect from Friday afternoon through early Monday morning.

Heavy rainfall associated with Typhoon Wutip could produce flash flooding across Guam and Rota.

A flash flood watch means that conditions may develop that lead to flash flooding. Flash flooding is a very dangerous situation. A flash flood may develop very

quickly from sudden heavy showers, especially in mountainous and poor-drainage areas. Monitor the latest forecasts and be prepared to take action if a flash flood warning is issued.

Rota residents are being urged to stay informed on the latest statements and advisories.

Weather briefing

During a weather briefing yesterday, Guam National Weather Service's Chip Guard told members of the governor's Cabinet and acting governor Arnold I. Palacios that Tropical Storm Wutip has been upgraded to a typhoon and advises the CNMI to be prepared to prepare as Wutip approaches.

Guard said at the briefing that tents that are currently being used as temporary shelters

should be able to withstand the tropical storm force winds that are expected this weekend.

According to a press release from NWS, the center of Typhoon Wutip was moving west-northwest at 13 mph and is expected to make a slight turn toward the northwest with little change in forward speed over the next 24 hours.

Maximum sustained winds have increased to 75 mph. Wutip is forecast to intensify through Friday night.

Typhoon force winds extend outward from the center up to 35 miles and tropical storm force winds extend outward from the center up to 165 miles south of the center and up to 115 miles north.

As of 1pm yesterday, Wutip was located at about 600 miles southeast of Guam and about 660 miles south-southeast of Saipan.

living in tents are highly encouraged to disassemble their tents if they are capable of doing so to alleviate DFEMS personnel and dispatched teams to assist those most in need of immediate aid," she said in a press release.

Deleon Guerrero also said that tent owners are responsible for their personal belongings and dismantling teams will not be held liable for personal property that aren't secured by the tent owners.

For those whose tents serve as their primary shelters, the Kagman shelter is open and accepting shelterees.

Deleon Guerrero said that in case the Kagman shelter fills up, the Public School System has three facilities on standby that have not been identified yet.

The Commonwealth Transit Authority will be offering transportation to people who need shelter but lack transportation.

"COTA is also available to provide transportation to residents who require assistance in relocating to the nearest shelter. Residents may contact the COTA Dispatch at 664-2690 or 285-2683," Deleon Guerrero said.

KILILI

From Page 1

was drafted in the 113th Congress by the so-called "Gang of Eight"—four members each from the Democratic and Republican parties.

This time, Sablan has asked the bipartisan group in the 116th U.S. Congress to reserve a section of the immigration bill for language that would focus solely on the Marianas.

"For us to put language, put in a marker on the draft. So Section 2109 is, like, for the CNMI," he said.

In the old bill, S. 774, Section 2109 sought to establish the CNMI-only lawful permanent resident status for long-term legal residents of the Commonwealth, therefore granting these individuals an immigrant visa or a lawful U.S. permanent status beginning five years after its enactment.

"I am going to try and use that same section and include language for the CNMI, for our long-term workers that all of whom are here legally. The compromise that I am making, in my own opinion, is that we give these individuals CNMI permanent resident status.

So, they won't be accused of jumping the line," said Sablan.

"Then, as their children turns 21 or their financial situation improved, and if they could qualify for a green card, and they should, nothing should stop them. In case they don't want a U.S. green card, then they would have permanent legal residence status in the CNMI."

He added that granting long-term workers permanent status would lessen the tedious process of having to schedule interviews with the U.S. embassy every time they visit their home countries. "They can then travel to the U.S. with a [tourist] visa and they can travel to the Philippines anytime without getting advanced parole and other nonsense. If they have permanent residency, they won't be needing that."

S. 774 was introduced by Senate minority leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) in the 113th Congress and co-sponsored by the other seven members of the bipartisan group. The U.S. Senate passed S. 744 on a 68-32 vote, but it was not considered by the Republican-controlled House and the legislation died.

PROPST

From Page 1

Saipan Tribune called CUC executive director Gary Camacho to get more details on the issue, but he did not reply.

IBCFI, which is based in Yigo, Guam, is owned by a William Toelkes, whose son, Robert Toelkes, is the husband of Amelia R. Toelkes, who was implicated in a questionable generator purchase deal between CUC and General Pacific Services Marianas Inc.

Amelia R. Toelkes was the GPSM president that was awarded the contract by CUC in purchasing an 8- to 10-megawatt diesel generating system. Robert Toelkes has his own company, International Bridge Corp., but has filed for bankruptcy a few years ago.

Robert Toelkes' company failed to finish a project award-

ed to it at the John F. Kennedy High School in Guam and was also implicated in the M/V Luta controversy as he was listed as one of the defendants in a case filed by Japanese investor Takahisa Yamamoto.

Propst said that CUC first awarded the contract to another company, but Robert Toelkes protested and the CUC selection committee changed its decision and chose IBCFI. "Why give the contract to a company with a guy that's connected to a questionable deal?" asked Propst. "A deal that led to the removal of the CUC board members and investigations by the Attorney General, the Office of the Public Auditor, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. I don't know if the [request for proposal] is still under investigation."

He said that, similar to the previous issue with GPSM,

he is again concerned with the contract. "The guy [Robert Toelkes] has returned. CUC should have the right to refuse and block him from joining any bidding."

"Some of us in the Legislature would continue to be the watchdogs of the CNMI government, especially if it involves the taxpayers' dollars. They had declared an emergency situation, but that does not bother me. Rather, it is the generator purchase deal."

Propst said the emergency situation is also for reserve power, yet Rota uses only less than 2 megawatts of power. He added that he got information that the Matsui engine is expected to be repaired in the first week of March that guarantees an additional 2.5 megawatts.

"Rota Resort also has three 1MW engines that has more power to provide for Rota.

The public doesn't know anything about this. And for what I've heard, they purchased a used generator. This will be passed on to us CUC ratepayers," said Propst.

"Even the shipping cost and the operation of a crane to unload the generator, it will cost thousands of dollars. The contractor should shoulder this and not CUC's customers to be billed. There are a lot of things that's not right with this deal."

He called for further investigation and scrutiny of the deal. "I am pleading with the AG not to sign the emergency purchase until further review is done. We have a lot of questions, like why was the purchase necessary? What's the going rate for a brand new or used generator? Why the rush? Rushing this contract is very disturbing."

"Who are the people involved in the deal and mak-

ing money out of it? I hope the House and Senate [Public Utilities, Transportation, and Communications] chairs would investigate or call CUC about this and get more information about the deal."

Senate PUTC report

Camacho, in his report to the Senate PUTC Committee meeting last Tuesday, said the 2MW unit is currently meeting the power demand in Rota, but the problem is the reserve capacity after the Matsui engine No. 2 encountered problems last month.

"It turns out it has reduced the reserve capacity to what it is today. But, our crews and specialized personnel were sent out immediately. More have been added since to start removing the generator."

"And the damage to that Matsui is on the generator side, not mechanical side, so

the generator was moved from one unit to the other unit because both are identical. And being transferred over, that project should be finished on March 3, then we would anticipate—from what I understand with my conversation [with people involve]—we will have the 2.5MW back in reserve capacity."

He said that the board also approved the emergency procurement of a CAT generator and they anticipate the shipment to arrive anytime this week. "Although there's a crane issue on Rota. The contract states that there's a way to resolve that and we will be able to get it on the island."

"[The purchase] will add another 2MW. Although [Rota's] peak demand is from 1.5MW to 1.8MW, it will bring the reserve capacity at that point to near 8.5MW, with the peak demand of 1.8MW.

TETRIS tents disassembled to get ready for typhoon

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Mayor's Office started disassembling temporary tents yesterday in anticipation of Typhoon Wutip, which is projected to pass by the Marianas this weekend.

"We started [yesterday] afternoon in the Koblerville area," said Saipan Mayor's Office director of field operations Joann Aquino.

According to Aquino, the Temporary Emergency Tent and Roofing Installation Support program of the CNMI government, or TETRIS, contacted their office to assist with Typhoon Wutip preparations, specifically the disassembly of TETRIS tents starting in the Koblerville area.

Aquino added that the TETRIS program staff would be calling those who availed of the program to ask if they wish to have their temporary tents disassembled in anticipation of Typhoon Wutip.

"Residents [interested] in having their tents disassembled need to coordinate with TETRIS as well," Aquino said.

Although those under the program are being called one by one, Aquino noted that her five teams went door to door at about 1:30pm to 2pm to ask people if they want their tents disassembled.

"The tents need to be clear of all their personal property before we can [disassemble] them," she said.

Aquino did not specify the other areas on Saipan that are targeted for the disassembly of tents, but she noted that her office is coordinating with TETRIS and goes where there is a need for additional manpower.

As of 5pm yesterday, the U.S. National Weather Service in Guam noted that Typhoon Wutip continues to move west-northwest at 16 mph through Chuuk. At the time of publication, Wutip had maximum wind speeds of 75 mph, with Guam just inside the tropical storm force wind range.

As of 5pm yesterday, Typhoon Wutip was 550 miles southeast of Guam, 185 miles west-southwest of Chuuk, and 615 south-southeast of Saipan.

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OPA, OAG's help sought on allowance issue

By JON PEREZ

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REPORTER

The minority bloc of the CNMI House of Representatives has sought the help of the Office of the Public Auditor and the Office of the Attorney General on the issue of allowances that can be drawn from their office allotments.

The letter was signed by House minority leader Rep. Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan), Reps. Tina Sablan (Ind-Saipan) and Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), and first-term lawmakers Rep. Sheila Babauta (Ind-Saipan), Richard Lizama (Ind-Saipan), and Donald Manglona (Ind-Rota).

Four floor amendments were offered in Tuesday's House session, but only Rep. Ivan A. Blanco's (R-Saipan) was adopted on a 17-1 vote, while those proposed by Babauta, Lizama, and Villagomez were each defeated.

The floor amendments proposed by the three minority members caused a lengthy discussion. The proposals would require publicly available reports detailing expenditures made from the allowances (Villagomez's), impose penalties for failure to timely file reports or report public purpose justifications (Babauta's), and mandate that expenditures from the allowances shall only be for public purposes as defined by CNMI laws, rules, and regulations (Lizama's).

Blanco's amendment requires each House member to "maintain a record of all transactions and corresponding public purpose justifications"



JON PEREZ

House minority leader Rep. Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan), left, talks to Rep. Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) on the floor amendments introduced in connection with the House Rules and Procedures in last Wednesday's House session at the House Chamber on Capital Hill.

related to the allowances.

The minority bloc and almost all members of the majority supported Blanco's amendment. Rep. Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero (R-Saipan) was the only member who voted no to Blanco's floor amendment.

Guerrero said he would not get funding for his allowance from the money that he uses for his office operation and the public is more than welcome to see where he spends the allotment. "I am not taking any allowance. If the community or any member of the public wants to view

my records, it is open."

"Most of funding in operations that I use are for tents [used] for [funerals] provided in Precincts [1 to 5]. I'm rebuilding bus stops and these are public funds. You are welcome to come to my office, I will open the door. They can even request [Department of] Finance," added an emotional Guerrero.

Sablan said the minority bloc is seeking guidance from Public Auditor Michael Pai and Attorney General Edward Manibusan on the allowance that the House is

proposing to authorize.

"Our primary concern is ensuring transparency and accountability for those funds. The House adopted a floor amendment offered by Blanco with support from the minority, to require members who draw allowances to keep records related to all their transactions and corresponding public purpose justifications," said Sablan.

"The proposed rules must sit on the legislative calendar for at least one more day before we can vote on final passage. During yesterday's ses-

sion, we notified the members of our request to the AG and OPA, and provided copies of the letter to the members and the House clerk as a House communication."

The letter said the House is poised to adopt an amended rule that would let members to draw an allowance of at least \$2,500 but would not exceed \$5,000 every month. The allowance would cover food, lodging, and other expenses for community events and activities, and other expenses for attending to legislative business in any senatorial district and outside the CNMI.

The minority bloc, in the letter, said that OPA has evaluated the allowances given to members of the 13th Senate in 2003 "where under the Senate arrangement, the [Department of] Finance secretary issued lump sum payments for each senator to deposit to a personal bank account or to cash it outright.

"Reports detailing all transactions related to these subsistence allowances were not required. Although the House rules do not characterize the allowances as 'subsistence,' the arrangement under which these allowances would be issued is similar," the letter said.

The minority bloc asked OPA and the OAG to provide the House leadership with their evaluations, guidance, and/or legal opinions on the proposed House rules on allowances.

They listed eight questions:

1. Whether the House has the authority to grant such allowances to its members, drawing from each member's individual office allotment;
2. Whether the proposed allowance for defraying the costs of food, lodging, and other incidental expenses related to legislative business, satisfies public purpose requirements;
3. Whether the proposed allowance amount is reasonable;
4. Whether the [Finance] secretary has the authority to issue lump sum payments for allowances to individual members for deposits into personal bank accounts or to cash outright;
5. Whether the [OPA] has the authority to audit receipt, possession, and disbursement allowances, as well as the personal bank accounts into which allowances would be deposited;
6. Whether the Open Government Act would apply to records documenting transactions from these allowances;
7. Whether any minimum reporting or other accountability requirements would apply to the use of allowances; and
8. What measures, if any, the House might consider adopting to enhance transparency and accountability for these public funds.

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Man allegedly beats up girlfriend on Valentine's Day

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
Kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A former police officer allegedly kidnapped and beat up his girlfriend on Valentine's Day because she wouldn't give him her cellphone and he suspected her of having an affair.

Edward Babauta Pua, 37, has been charged with kidnapping, assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

Pua, a former police officer, allegedly assaulted his girlfriend after she refused to let him go through her cellphone.

According to a police report, Pua forced the victim to remain in his car and drove to Marpi. He accused the victim of having an affair and used his right elbow to hit her left temple.

Witnesses at the former Mariana Resort & Spa area—now called the Marianas Base Camp—heard the victim shouting for help.

Police officers said the victim had a swollen face and lips, bruising on her left and right arms, and above her chest.

The victim told police that she was taken by Pua against her will, that he became upset when she refused to give him her cellphone.

According to the victim, while Pua was driving and

punching her head area, she reached for the gear and shifted it, causing the car to slow down. The victim said she was able to steer the wheel to the left, causing it to turn near the entrance to MBC.

She said when the car stopped she got down and began shouting for help and ran toward the entrance.

The victim said she then felt a blow to the back of her head and fell to the ground. Pua told her to get up, but as soon as she got up, she tried to run but her hair was pulled and she ended back on the ground.

While on the ground, the victim said Pua punched her simultaneously with both hands. She said Pua then dragged her back to the car, but she refused until she saw someone with a flashlight and shouted for help.

On Feb. 15, Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho imposed a \$25,000 cash bail on Pua.

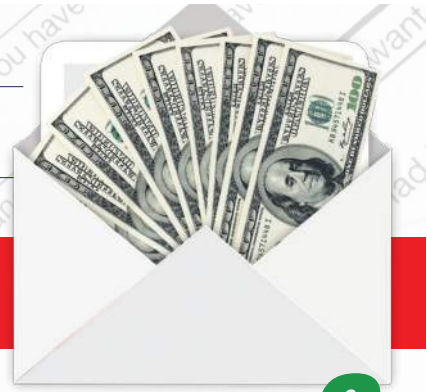
On Feb. 15, Pua posted 10 percent of his bail, \$2,500. Pua was released to his mother who was his third-party custodian.

Pua was ordered by the court to have no contact with the victim or her 17-year-old daughter who witnessed the assault.

Pua waived a preliminary hearing and was scheduled to appear in court on Feb. 25 at 9am for an arraignment.



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TanHoldings, TSLF finalize allocation of \$1M donation

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**
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REPORTER

The allocation of a portion of the \$1-million donation of TanHoldings Corp. and the Tan Siu Lin Foundation was finalized yesterday, with the remaining \$300,000 handed out to various groups as the company's assistance for Super Typhoon Yutu relief.

TanHoldings president and chief executive officer Jerry Tan presented 10 organizations—Karidat Social Services,

the Salvation Army, Empty Vessel Ministry Foundation, Saipan Little League Inc., Lady Diann Torres Foundation, Micronesia Islands Natural Alliance, the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa, the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association, the United Filipino Organization, and the Maturana House of Prayer—with \$20,000 each in Super Typhoon Yutu relief assistance. That was for a total of \$200,000.

The remaining \$100,000, according to Tan would be

used for relief goods but plans have yet to be finalized.

"These 10 organizations represent a large part of our community, so we need to partner with them to help Super Typhoon Yutu victims," Tan said.

The 10 chosen organizations included religious organizations, athletic organizations, non-profit organizations, and many other types. The variety, according to Tan, is in line with his company's goal.

"We are trying to reach out to a large part of the community. ... There are many organizations that we can identify and \$20,000 is a meaningful amount for them to go out and do their work," he said. "We can only choose 10, so those are the 10 we identified."

As for the company's plans for the remaining \$100,000, Tan said, "We have some initial concepts and we are ready to finalize them shortly and then we will go out and [distribute] the relief goods... and that would conclude the entire \$1 million."

TanHoldings Corp. and TSL Foundation have pledged to donate \$1 million to help with the CNMI's recovery efforts from Super Typhoon Yutu.

The initial allocation of the donation included \$200,000 to the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter, \$300,000 to the Commonwealth Advocates for Relief Efforts, and \$200,000 to CNMI Mass Care, which is a collection of relief programs and activities.

"We must not forget that recovery work is a long-term

process because of the magnitude of [Super Typhoon Yutu]. We might be better off today, but definitely not everyone in the community is normal yet, so let us continue to help our friends and neighbors," Tan said yesterday.

"This is my home, our home. When we are faced with... this level of devastation, I believe we all need to step up and help our neighbors and our friends," he said in a previous interview with *Saipan Tribune*.

Ayuyu named area supervisor of McDonald's Saipan

McDonald's announced this week that Joe E. Ayuyu Jr. has been promoted to area supervisor for the two McDonald's restaurants on Saipan. That means he will now be in

charge of managing both restaurants.

Ayuyu, the son of Joe and Marcia Ayuyu Sr., graduated with a business degree from Miami University in Ohio

in 2014. He then returned to Saipan and started working for McDonald's, first as a manager trainee, then as general manager and now as area supervisor.

To prepare him for his new job assignment, Ayuyu attended many McDonald's-sponsored management classes on Saipan, Guam, Hawaii and eventually graduated from Hamburger University in 2016 with honors.

Ayuyu's background includes working at Bank of Saipan, currently serving as a member of the Zoning board since 2014, and also currently serving as chairman of the 2019 Liberation Parade Committee.

Ayuyu's parents' long-term goal is to eventually pass on the business, both on Saipan and Guam, to him. His next assignment within the company after a period of time on Saipan will be to manage all the Guam restaurants. **(PR)**



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CEC to start mailing out ballots by Feb. 27

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Election Commission will start mailing out absentee ballots this Wednesday, Feb. 27, if the ballots are ready by then for

the special election, according to CEC election register clerk Robin Sablan yesterday.

Sablan said they will start sending out the absentee ballots after Feb. 26, the deadline to apply for absentee voting by electronic/mail.

Sablan said upon receiving the ballots, absentee voters can then cast their votes and mail back their ballots to CEC to be counted.

Right now, he said, CEC does not have the ballots.

CEC has contracted a local company to print about 4,000 ballots.

Sablan said the last time the CEC will check the U.S. Postal Office is at about 4pm, before

it closes on March 23, which is the day of the special election.

"Whatever [ballots] we take on that time before [USPS] closes, that's the only one that will be counted," he said.

As for the polling places, Sablan said the Garapan Elementary School has confirmed with CEC that one of their classrooms will be available for a designated polling site.

Sablan said Oleai Elementary

School also informed them that one of their classrooms will be available for the election.

He said they are fine with the classrooms instead of the cafeterias as it's only a special election for a vacant seat in the Precinct 3 House of the Representatives.

March 8 is the target date for the CEC board's designation of two polling places.

Sablan said they, however, want to do the designation early.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres set the March 23 special election after the death of representative Francisco D. Dela Cruz last month.

There are four candidates—former representative Donald Cabrera Barcinas of the Democratic Party, Marco Taisakan Peter of the Republican Party, and independent bets David Castro Sablan and Mariano DLG Fajardo.

Hopwood campus is 'temporary'

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**
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REPORTER

The temporary Admiral Herbert G. Hopwood Middle School campus in Koblerville is just that—temporary—and still lacks some vital infrastructure, according to Education Commissioner Glenn Muña.

That lack includes Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant ramps and railways for students, among others, he said in an interview last Tuesday.

The temporary Hopwood campus is located across the Koblerville Elementary School.

According to Muña, the temporary campus also lacks a proper bell system and some tables and chairs, but all of the shortcomings of the temporary campus are being addressed.

"We are waiting for the bell system. It's going to be here in about a week or two," he said.

Right now, the campus is using an alternative bell system to notify the students and teachers of their next class. He said there is also another bell system that is reserved for emergency situations.

Muña further noted that he also has some chairs and tables that are now en route to Saipan, but he did not specify when they are expected to arrive.

Muña noted Tuesday morning that there are also ADA-compliant railways and ramps on the way. The campus currently has makeshift ramps for ADA compliance made out of wood, and only a few of the tents have it.

The campus also does not have a cafeteria. However, Muña noted that the vendors have agreed to adjust and provide meals that are delivered to classrooms directly to the students.

"The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers took the lead on this project to allow us to repair the other schools that were damaged," he said during his remarks prior to the ribbon cutting for the temporary campus.

Before that, Hopwood students were making do by sharing with the campus of Marianas High School. They'd have classes in the

morning; MHS had its classes in the afternoon.

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By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Naturalization ceremony swears in 12 new citizens

Twelve persons from five countries—the Philippines, Bangladesh, China, Japan, and Malaysia—took their oath as new U.S. citizens at a naturalization ceremony in the U.S. District Court for the NMI yesterday.

Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona, who presided over the ceremony, welcomed the new members of the American family and encouraged them to register so they can vote in the CNMI.

One of the duties of a citizen is to serve on a jury and Manglona hopes to see one of the new citizens in the court's jury box in a trial.

Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio, who is also a designated federal court judge, joined in welcoming the new citizens during the ceremony.

Mount Carmel School president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, who served as the guest speaker, recalled his mother, who told him that the U.S. was like her favorite popular TV show, *The Price is Right*.

Deleon Guerrero said his mother, who watched the show every day, was so good at guessing the prices of goods that, had she been on the show, she would have won a brand-new car.

Now that he is older, Deleon Guerrero, who teaches



U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona, front, second from left, Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio, seated leftmost, Mount Carmel School president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, seated second from right, and Immigration Services officer Shelia Kelty, seated rightmost, join the 12 new citizens in a group photo during a naturalization ceremony in the District Court yesterday morning.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

American civics and has been involved in American politics and government for a long time, said his mother may have had a point that she herself didn't quite understand.

"Because everything has a price. Nothing is free and anything worthwhile requires some kind of sacrifice, including the rights of citizenship," he said.

Deleon Guerrero told the new citizens that it is worth remembering the price that many have paid for the country, the people's rights, and citizenship.

He noted that over the years, the 14th Amendment has be-

come perhaps the single most important amendment in securing the rights of citizenship for minorities, the disabled, children, and numerous marginalized groups, with civil rights leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King fighting to secure those rights.

Whether in the halls of Congress, before the justices of the Supreme Court, or on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, countless Americans have fought for their civil rights to be counted as full and equal citizens of the United States, he said.

"They paid the price so that we could enjoy those same

rights today," he added.

Deleon Guerrero also cited the men and women of the armed services who have paid with their lives to secure those rights. He disclosed that his own brother served three tours—two in Iraq and one in Kuwait—and lost many fellow soldiers as they paid the ultimate price.

He said immigrants have also paid the price of citizenship. "Over the years, I have met many students whose parents had to leave their families and their homes to seek a better life in the U.S.," he said.

No matter what the political pundits say about immigrants,

Deleon Guerrero said, their struggle has not been easy. "Leaving their homes and families, they continued to pay the price as they adapted to a new culture, struggled to make ends meet, and confronted both explicit and implicit racism," he said.

Deleon Guerrero said immigrants have worked hard, endured much, and paid a price to be full-fledged members of American democracy.

He pointed out that when his mother said that the U.S. was like her favorite TV show, she may have had the wrong idea but she had the right words.

"Because there is a price for democracy. There is a price for our freedoms. And there is a price for citizenship. And I believe we can all agree that there is no price too high to pay for any of those things," Deleon Guerrero said.

Couple Crispina Aranda Bahillo and Jaime Asejo Bahillo, both from the Philippines, were among the 12 who took their oath as new citizens during the ceremony. Crispina Bahillo, 58, who is originally from Zambales, looks forward to the ease of travel as a U.S. citizens and being able to vote in the CNMI.

Crispina Bahill arrived on Saipan in 1982 and worked as an accountant for an auto

supply shop. Now she is the administrative manager of an engineering firm.

She then met Jaime Bahillo, a native of Legaspi, Philippines, who first came in 1984, and worked as an auto parts man. The following year, 1985, they got married. Jaime Bahillo, 63, is currently a custodial officer with the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

The couple has five children who are now all grown. Two of them are currently teaching in public schools. One is a police officer with the Department of Public Safety. One, who used to be a DPS police officer, is currently working at the U.S. Postal Office. The youngest is in college.

Another new citizen, MD Nurul Islam Bhuiyan, 48, originally of Bangladesh, is excited to register and vote in the CNMI. Bhuiyan first arrived in 1996 as a security guard. He has been married for five and half years now. Bhuiyan now owns a security agency and a rent-a-car business.

Aside from the Bahillo couple and businessman Bhuiyan, the new citizens are Hua Cui Chipwelong, Estrella Roja Legaspi Dela Cruz, Jian Qin Hall, Luciano Galang Larin, Mavelyn Trapal Mabini, Haniziel Doloso Nicholas, Gina Cabalum Santos, Kazuko Inoue Sondheim, and Sook Lan Wong.

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Adrian Pangelinan is new PIO at DPS

Department of Public Safety Commissioner Robert A. Guerrero recently appointed Adrian Pangelinan to serve as public information officer for the Department of Public Safety.

Pangelinan succeeds former DPS PIO Jacqueline Rae Shepard, who moved back to California to tend to family matters.

"Adrian possesses the skills necessary to truthfully and accurately report the daily work of our police officers on the frontline of public safety. We look forward to providing more timely updates for the community for their overall safety," Guerrero said.

Prior to this new position, Pangelinan served as public information officer and youth affairs representative for the CNMI Office of Youth Affairs under the Office of the Governor.

Pangelinan described his role as a community advocate that complements DPS' mission to ensure the safety and security of CNMI residents.

"As a public information officer under DPS, it is my job to bring relevant and accurate information to the people of the Marianas. Many times, good

deeds by our brothers and sisters in uniform go unnoticed and in favor of other stories. I hope to share more information on the department's accomplishments and details on the disturbances we encounter out in the public. My hope is that citizens of the Marianas truly see that the men and women who sacrifice their time away from their families and friends are recognized for the sacrifices they make to protect and serve our community," Pangelinan said.

Press secretary Kevin Bautista said that Pangelinan brings fresh energy into DPS and will work to ensure the department remains accountable to the public.

"Over the last couple of years, the administration has devoted itself to being a more effective rapid response team that can handle disasters and crises in an effective and expedient manner. [Pangelinan] brings his unique experience with crisis communication as a part of our team at the CNMI Joint Information Center during this typhoon recovery period. We're confident that he'll be a true advocate as we streamline every piece of vital information

for the public," Bautista said.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said that Pangelinan is a proven young leader who will assist DPS in prioritizing the safety and security of students and their families.

"Adrian's work at Youth Affairs, his volunteerism, and his work during our recovery have definitely helped him prepare to take on this new role. DPS public information is big priority for us, and we are continuing our commitment to keep the public informed, while also improving on ways to keep us all safe in our homes and villages," Torres said.

Pangelinan was a former on-air personality for Sorenson Media Group (Power 99 FM) and was a work study for the Northern Marianas College External Relations Office and Academic Programs and Services. He also served as a senator for the Associated Students of the Northern Marianas College in 2014.

He has an associate degree in natural resource management from the Northern Marianas College and is expected to receive his bachelor's degree in business management from NMC this summer. **(PR)**



Adrian Pangelinan is the new face of the Department of Public Safety as its public information officer. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SILC NOTICES

SILC focus group meeting on Rota

The Statewide Independent Living Council will hold a focus group meeting on Feb. 27, 2019, at 6pm at the Rota Youth Center to solicit public input for the new 3-year State Plan for Independent Living. For more information call 322-6537/8. **(PR)**

SILC focus group meeting on Tinian

The Statewide Independent Living Council will hold a focus group meeting on Feb. 27, 2019, at 6pm at the Tinian Public Library to solicit public input for the new 3-year State Plan for Independent Living. For more information call 322-6537/8. **(PR)**



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11th PIC Duck Race is postponed to March 2

The 11th Annual PIC Duck Race has been postponed and moved to March 2 due to inclement weather. Ticket sales are still open until March 2 or until they run out. The race will take place starting at 6pm in the PIC Lazy River.

The race, sponsored by Pacific Islands Club Saipan, was originally set for Feb. 23 but strong wind gusts and heavy rain may be a big hindrance in the outcome and fluidity of the race as the ducks might be blown in all directions in the Lazy River.

"We have not experienced it [heavy rain] before, therefore we will

take no risks. We want this event to go as smooth as possible," said Dennis Tababa, SEA director.

Ticket sales are still open until the day of the race, March 2, or they all sell out.

"It is sad to announce that after 11 years of the PIC Duck Race, this will be the first time that the event will be postponed. Safety and security of all our guests and visitors is very important to us," said Gloria Cavanagh, PIC general manager.

Event manager Reymark Castro is reminding the public that they may begin to use their duck ticket discounts

at the Magellan Restaurant. "I believe a number of duck buyers have begun making reservations at the Magellan Restaurant and avail of their 25-percent discounts. Rest assured that we will honor them," Castro said.

The beneficiaries of this year's duck race are the Commonwealth Cancer Association and Commonwealth Advocates for Recovery Efforts.

Pacific Islands Club would like to thank our sponsors: ELand Group, Kensington Hotel, Coral Ocean Golf Resort, Pacific Trading Corp. including Pepsi, Monster Energy Drink and Gatorade, and Bridge Capital, LLC. (PR)

PH consulate to hold outreach on Saipan

The Philippine Consulate General in Agana, Guam, in coordination with Philippine Honorary Consul to CNMI Glicerio Arago, will conduct a consular outreach mission on Saipan from March 3 to 5, from 8am to 4pm at the Kristo Rai Parish in Garapan.

Biometrics and personal data capturing for ePassport applications will be done according to schedule. All ePassport applicants are reminded to

check the list so that they are aware of their respective schedules.

Those who are on the list of ePassport applicants are reminded to:

1. Show up at the venue on the date and time indicated in the schedule; and
2. Wear proper attire (i.e. with collar and sleeves)

For consular services, including passport renewal, that require civil registration documents (e.g. birth cer-

tificate and marriage certificate), documents from the Philippine Statistics Authority or from former National Statistics Office will be accepted.

Please note that personal appearance is required for all ePassport applications.

For confirmation and clarification, call (670) 233-6293 and ask for Mel Santos or email eppt.pcgagana@gmail.com. (PR)

2018 Individual Income Tax Forms now available

The Department of Finance, Division of Revenue and Taxation, announced yesterday that the 2018 individual income tax forms and instructions are now available for download on the DOF website (www.cnmidof.net) and will be available for pickup at the Revenue and Taxation office in the Joeten Dandan building beginning Feb. 28, 2019.

In addition, Revenue and Taxation announced that it is offering direct deposit of tax refunds. Taxpayers can get refunds faster by choosing to have refunds deposited directly into their checking or savings accounts, rather than waiting for checks to arrive in the mail. Also, direct deposits are a more secure way of receiving refunds,

because there is not a check that can be lost or stolen. Additional information regarding direct deposits will be available on the Revenue and Taxation website.

As a reminder, the deadline for filing 2018 tax returns is April 15, 2019.

Visit www.cnmidof.net or contact the Department of Finance for more information. (PR)

UOG professor releases book of tanka poetry

The classic Japanese poetry of a professor at the University of Guam's School of Education has been published by JustFiction Edition.

Winter Woods: My Journey into Tanka by Yukiko Inoue-Smith, professor of educational psychology and research, was released on Jan. 2.

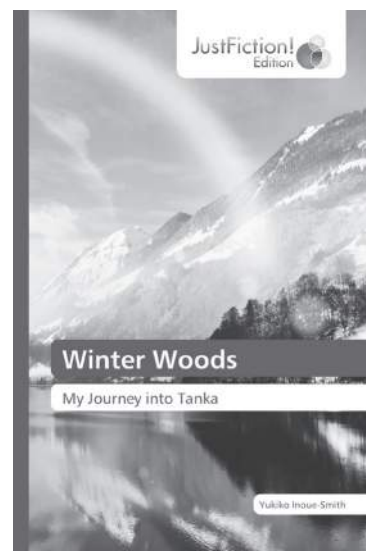
"Living in Japan, the U.S. mainland, and Guam have provided me with many experiences that led me to think about the components of my daily life," she said. "During this time, writing *tanka* became an important part of my life."

Tanka, which translates into "short song," is one of the oldest styles of Japanese poetry with a structure similar to haiku. *Tanka* poems written in Japanese are verses of 31 syllables in one straight line. But in English and other languages, they are often written using five lines.

Winter Woods is written about Inoue-Smith's personal journey into writing *tanka*. It follows her journey from Japan to America to Guam, describing the moments and experiences that had the most impact on her and how she decided to turn those moments into art.

An excerpt from *Winter Woods: My Journey into Tanka*:

*I tell myself
"I'll do my best" and
have continued my journey
with only myself
as an ally*



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Winter Woods: My Journey into Tanka by Yukiko Inoue-Smith that was released on Jan. 2 is a compilation of the Japanese poetry form called *tanka*.

Inoue-Smith has worked extensively with *tanka*. The book contains select poems from some of her previous collections in addition to new poetry and essays.

Other published *tanka* collections by Inoue-Smith include *The Inescapable Seasons of Life*, *Do Cats Dream?* and *A Shawl of Mist*. She has also authored books on educational topics, including *A Jungle Named Academia: Approaches to Self-Development and Growth*. Her works are available for purchase via Amazon and JustFiction. (PR)

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Office of the Executive Director

EMERGENCY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CUC-RFP-19-013

AGINGAN PRIMARY SCREEN PROJECT

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified vendors for the attainment of a Primary Screen for the Agingan Wastewater Treatment Plant at CUC Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The RFP Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 (non-refundable) for one RFP package set. The RFP package consisting of the specifications and scope-of-work will be emailed to all registered prospective proposers email ID. Prospective Proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division.

One (1) original and four (5) hard copies, along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk or USB Drive in PDF format must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-RFP-19-013, Agingan Primary Screen Project" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **March 21, 2019 at 10:00 AM (ChST)**. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

A *Proposal Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total proposal price must accompany the proposals. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or proposal bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful Proposer. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Proposers are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Discussions may be conducted with responsible offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

All Offeror are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Offeror are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page: <https://marianaslabor.net/>. The proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 7, 2019** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator at email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Westen Knudsen, P.E., Senior Engineer for Water/Wastewater at email address westen.knudsen@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrative Technician, Senior at email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Office of the Executive Director

EMERGENCY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CUC-RFP-19-014

SADOG TASI PRIMARY SCREEN PROJECT

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified vendors for the attainment of a Primary Screen for the Sadog Tasi Wastewater Treatment Plant at CUC Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The RFP Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 (non-refundable) for one RFP package set. The RFP package consisting of the specifications and scope-of-work will be emailed to all registered prospective proposers email ID. Prospective Proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division.

One (1) original and four (5) hard copies, along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk or USB Drive in PDF format must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-RFP-19-014, Sadog Tasi Primary Screen Project" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **March 22, 2019 at 10:00 AM (ChST)**. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

A *Proposal Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total proposal price must accompany the proposals. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or proposal bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful Proposer. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Proposers are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

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All Offeror are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Offeror are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

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Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 8, 2019** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator at email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Westen Knudsen, P.E., Senior Engineer for Water/Wastewater at email address westen.knudsen@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrative Technician, Senior at email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

High surf, high risk for rip currents until Wednesday

A high surf advisory in effect on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota until 6am Wednesday.

There is also a high risk of rip currents through Wednesday afternoon.

The National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, has issued a high surf advisory, which is in effect until 6am Wednesday.

Based on the information

received from the NWS and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, a trade-wind swell will generate hazardous surf conditions and continue to produce a high risk of rip currents along east and north facing reefs through today, Friday. Tropical Storm Wutip will prolong the hazardous conditions

through part of next week.

For north facing reefs, hazardous surf of 8 to 10 feet will build over the next few days. Surf will remain hazardous through next Wednesday.

Along east facing reefs,

hazardous surf of 9 to 12 feet is now occurring and will continue to build over the next few days. Surf will remain hazardous through next Wednesday.

Hazardous surf conditions may spread to south

and west facing reefs over the weekend as Tropical Storm Wutip moves southwest and west of the Marianas. A high surf warning is possible as well. A surf warning is possible as well.

The public is being advised to avoid venturing near reefs and beaches, especially those

facing north and east facing reefs. Strong rip currents will be life threatening. If you become caught in a rip current, remain calm, swim parallel to shore, then back toward the beach when possible. Do not attempt to swim directly against a rip current as you will tire quickly. (EOC)

Another Guam donation arrives

A container filled with flatscreen televisions, 1,000 pillows, 200 blankets, and thousands of clothing and assorted items arrived on Saipan yesterday. The items were sent to aid the Commonwealth Health Center and families impacted by Super Typhoon Yutu.

"The struggle continues for many families so I have not stopped working to help our families get back on their feet. Some lost entire homes, others lost their only clothes for work or school, so hopefully these clothing items will allow individuals to instead spend their money on food, transportation and construction," said Grace Sablan Vaiage, who is the overall coordinator for this relief container and who initiated contact with Guam Sen. Wil Castro.

"Our shared love for the Marianas extends in time of

need as well as in time of prosperity. Together we can overcome even the most difficult of times," said Castro.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, in partnership with Castro and coordination by Vaiage, were able to network with nearly a dozen entities and individuals to make this shipment possible.

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. CEO Esther Muña and facilities manager Warren Villagomez were present in Guam to inspect and receive the donation.

Guam Plaza Hotel, Oasis Empowerment Center, Victor Hamling and family, Hope Camper and family, American President Lines, and Guam Transport & Warehouse, with the assistance of the CNMI Department of Public Safety and over a dozen volunteers in Guam, contributed to relief effort. (PR)

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

It's time to get tougher on anti-vaxxers

Four years ago, North Carolina lawmakers considered closing a loophole allowing parents to declare a religious exemption to vaccinations without showing evidence of their faith. It was a smart step to protect families from the misinformed irresponsibility of anti-vaccination parents, but lawmakers backed down in the face of small but furious protests.

Since then, the number of N.C. families declaring religious exemptions has continued to rise. Not coincidentally, our state has endured chicken pox outbreaks in 2016, 2017 and 2018, including one last November that afflicted 36 students at an Asheville school with a high concentration of vaccine exemptions. Now, with a measles outbreak raging along the border of Washington State and Oregon—plus 200 cases confirmed in New York since October—lawmakers here have more reminders of the potential cost of inaction.

It's time to get tougher about vaccinations in North Carolina and elsewhere, not only by eliminating the religious exemption loophole, but by taking additional steps to make sure parents don't game exemption laws and rules.

Currently, North Carolina statute requires vaccinations for measles, mumps and other diseases for children attending day care, K-12 schools, and colleges and universities. Like many states, North Carolina allows exemptions for medical reasons and religious beliefs. The medical exemption needs to be signed by a doctor, but the religious exemption requires only the name and date of birth for whom the request is being made. No explanation of the religious objection—or even evidence of religious affiliation or faith—is required.

That loophole should be eliminated. Most major mainstream religions—including all Christian denominations—have no prohibition on vaccinations, and many advocate for immunization, according to a study in the medical journal, *Vaccine*. The Amish, long rumored to forbid vaccinations, have no such prohibition, and Jehovah's Witnesses have softened their stance on immunizations and now allow them.

Objections to vaccinations also are not based on science, which has regularly and thoroughly debunked the notion that vaccines are unsafe. Despite that, anti-vaxxers stubbornly shake their head, fueled by an internet-based patchwork of falsehoods and suppositions. Their recklessness not only endangers children who have legitimate medical exemptions, but adults who have vulnerable immune systems because of chemotherapy and other treatments.

North Carolina remains among the states with the highest vaccination rates, but between the 2012-2013 and 2016-2017 school years, the number of kindergartners

See **ANTI-VAXXERS** on Next Page



New cake, old recipe

When Clark Kerr unveiled A Master Plan for Higher Education in California in 1960, it was heralded as a stroke of genius. And it was. Kerr went to the capitol in Sacramento requesting unparalleled financial support to build scientific prowess. He won the arguments, in part, because California community colleges were open to “any student capable of benefiting from instruction”—essentially free. University of California campuses and California State University schools were required to maintain a lower-division to upper-division student ratio of 40:60, creating a three-tiered layer cake (community colleges, Cal state schools, and UC campuses) that leaned toward community college transfers like the famous tower in Pisa. And, the UC campuses helped attain JFK’s vision to put a “...man on the moon before the end of the decade.”

Today a new set of forces is at work in the environment that demand a similar approach for stepwise transition from community college to a four-year university. However, the forces now at work are focused on reducing the cost to individual students. Nearly every statehouse has said, “No more!” to universities. The average cost of public university attendance has increased fivefold in three decades, while community colleges have increased by threefold.

Student debt is a \$1.5-trillion national tragedy. The housing bubble, often compared to student debt, is different. Housing loans provide tangible property. Education provides skill, hope and ambition, but nothing that can be “resold.” Too frequently, positive outcomes evaporate when over borrowing added to under studying lead to lost hope. The federally-subsidized insured-loan industry is relentlessly ineffective at reducing debt. It creates higher costs. The dregs of debt left on the bottom of the pan? Students.

There are 66 high schools in the Texas Panhandle. I visited every one, looked into the eyes of the thousands of students, and, without apology, said if they needed to borrow money for the first two years to study at WT, do not come. Likewise, if they take on debt as freshmen and sophomores to attend Harvard, the University of Texas, MIT, Texas Tech or any other university in America, do not go there. Instead, enroll in community college. Students were surprised; the administrators and teachers who heard this were shocked. One asked me, “How can you get away with that?” Easily—it serves students, and that is what we do in The Texas A&M University System.

A trifecta of deception drives debt up and fulfillment down. First, everybody should go to college. Second, an education is worth whatever it costs. Third, somebody will lend money without asking a single question about your ability to repay.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board recommends that no student incur debt exceeding 60 percent of the anticipated starting salary upon graduation.

Texas Panhandle community colleges cost about \$7,000 for

By **WALTER V. WENDLER**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Walter V. Wendler is president of West Texas A&M University. His reflections are available at www.walterwendler.com.



tuition and fees to secure an associate degree. Those same two years at WT are priced at \$16,500—a savings of roughly 60 percent. And, WT is at the lower end of the cost spectrum. Students who earn a bachelor’s degree after transfer pay \$24,000. If they had attended WT all four years, the cost is \$33,000.

Memorandums of understanding with community colleges allow WT to be designated as an “official.” These recently-executed agreements promote transparency between institutions, meet FERPA requirements in letter and spirit and provide access to student records that enable informed advising for transfers. Effective transfer rests on good teaching and accurate advising. This one-two punch resolves nearly all articulation issues.

Formula funding relative to transfer programs serves students and institutional goals well. In the Texas formula funding framework, various courses, at various levels, in various disciplines are funded at various rates—all based on historic trends in costs. It is a rational system that calibrates real institutional delivery costs for real students.

Community colleges are not university competitors: 56 percent of community college transfers end up in public universities, and bachelor’s degrees are earned by 17 percent within six years. The metrics are not good, but the cost is low. Only 60 percent of native freshman graduate in six years. These metrics are not good either, and the cost is high. Students who transfer into public flagships graduate at a higher rate than native freshman according to a 2009 study by Bowen et al. Unfortunately, 43 percent of the hours earned at community college do not transfer. Advising is the cornerstone. Individually-focused, faculty-deliberated transferability of courses into specific degree programs will address the issue, but it takes institutional commitment and requires “flagship envy” to disappear at receiving campuses.

Remarkably, students who complete an associate degree are more likely to earn a bachelor’s degree than native freshmen after six years according to Columbia’s Community College Research Center.

Kerr’s layer cake was a good idea. It’s still a good idea. It might not put another man on the moon, but it could help keep a person out of the poor house.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

When size matters

Technology can tempt us to snub mental math and to trust machines to tell us everything. Well, call me old-school, but I like keeping my brain engaged in reality's texture. For those of similar mind, I'm going to mention a few basic tidbits that have proven useful when straddling the worlds of metric measurements and English measurements. Saipan often juggles both worlds.

Actually, I don't even know if "English" is the correct term for the system of measurement that I'm calling "English," but I'll use it anyway.

These tidbits are only useful if they're easily remembered, so this is an exercise in minimization.

Temperature: My temperature tidbit is a favorite with pilots. It's also important when serving tourists. I've mentioned it before. You can get a ball park conversion from Celsius to Fahrenheit by doubling the Celsius and then adding 30. Thus, 27C becomes an estimated 84F. The precise answer, for comparison, is 80.6F. The two figures are certainly close enough for advising a client on how to pack for a trip, and this technique is also useful as a sanity check on precise calculations.

Length: One useful tidbit is the fact that there are 2.54 centimeters to the inch. That's such a commonly-used number I think it's often memorized. For mental math it's easy to round it to 2.5.

Another tidbit is that a 10K run (a common distance for such things; the "K" means kilometers) is equivalent to 6.2 miles. Of course, if you're going to travel 6.2 miles you might as well get some lunch while you're at it, so it makes sense to fire up the car and hit the drive-through.

Well, so far, so good, but what sticks in my craw is going between yards and meters, or feet and meters. This can be a headache for a fast conversion. The best I've come up with is that a meter is about 10% longer than a yard, but when I'm in these situations I usually need an exact answer so I wind up scrambling for a pencil or calculator.

Weight: There are 2.2 pounds in a kilogram. I think that a kilogram is technically a unit of mass, while a pound is a unit of weight, but I'm not a scientist so I don't have to care.

Volume: There are 3.8 liters in a U.S. gallon. While this is certainly no secret, I don't think many people keep it in mind.

Gallons are tricky things, since there's also an "Imperial" gallon used by the British. I've never paid any attention to this. However, if I get the E-type Jaguar I've always wanted, I'll revisit the issue.

Summary: In summary, then, some basic tidbits that have stood the test of time, at least in my noggin, are: Double it and add 30; 2.54; 6.2; 10%; 2.2; and 3.8. Presented in this thumbnail manner, the information can be used to test ourselves on the relevant contexts and related information.

I suspect that the English system will continue to decline in relative importance to the metric system. After all, the long-term trajectories of the underlying economies certainly favor the latter.

But for the sake of posterity, I'll mention there's some human-scale wisdom behind an inch being the width of a thumb; a foot being, well, about as long as a foot; and a mile being 1,000 paces. On that last note, the term "mile" is derived from the Latin "milia" for thousand.

If you read the British press you'll encounter the term

By ED STEPHENS

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Visit Ed Stephens Jr. at EdStephensJr.com. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the Saipan Tribune.



"stone," which equates to 14 pounds of weight. Now you know. For some reason, I have never been able to memorize this simple fact. I guess the rocks in my head don't have room for one more stone.

But there is room in the garage for an E-type Jaguar, so I'll just keep dreaming of using one for my next 10K run.

■■■

Speaking of measurements, I'm going to refine some rough items from last week's column about the Orion constellation. I referred to the star Rigel as white. Then I mentioned that Rigel is a blue supergiant. So, what's up? Well, the "blue supergiant" designation is a technical specification that came from a NASA Web page. By contrast, in my very non-technical stargazing, Rigel seems more whitish than blue, hence the white in my observational notes. I also mentioned that our solar system sits on the Orion Spur, also known as the Orion Arm, of our galaxy. I should have also mentioned that our galaxy is called the "Milky Way."

Dead calm in paradise

A strange calm has descended on these isles in recent weeks. I find it rather very unsettling in that it usually brings with it bad tidings. At its simplest level it deals with conditions that affect quality of life here.

For instance, the loss of \$7 billion from the exit of Nippon investments in recent past presents a challenge to the NMI in terms of its economic contraction. How do we replace investment exit? Is so-called leadership on the ball on this score?

The loss also obviates other pertinent queries regarding funding for ongoing services, e.g., how would they fare as revenue decreases? It's a tough cookie to resolve as the coffers go empty beyond normalcy as investments exit these isles.

Austerity was implemented this week (10-12 percent cut) given that revenues keep moving on its southerly slide. How many government employees are there and wouldn't salary decrease affect family buying power, especially the 15,000 now earning poverty income? This number may increase even further as cuts or decrease in income takes its bite on the family purse.

ANTI-VAXXERS

From Page 14

excused from immunization more than doubled, the Raleigh News & Observer reported. Those came mostly from western North Carolina, but there also are pockets of religious exemptions in Mecklenburg and Wake counties.

N.C. lawmakers should not only follow the lead of their counterparts in Oregon and Washington state—who are crafting legislation that would eliminate non-medical exemptions—but lawmakers in California, who are contemplating allowing health departments to crack down on doctors who sign off on questionable medical waivers.

Anti-vaxxers argue that the state has no right to tell them how to care for their children. But government has long protected kids from poor parenting, and it has long shielded the greater community from the recklessness of individuals. It's time to treat vaccination deniers for what they are—a threat to others.

(c)2019 *The Charlotte Observer* (Charlotte, N.C.)

Meanwhile, Japan has decided to shore up domestic growth at home after the adverse effects of natural disasters like heavy rain and earthquakes. Thus, the homeward bound of Nippon investments from all over Asia and the Pacific. Would the planned growth move forward smoothly or would there be issues ahead?

Is the casino industry now a stable investment and what's the future of the retirement program? Retirees need definite answers so they know that there's security in their future. Has it collected its BGRT for fiscal year 2018 and 2019?

With a wobbly economy riddled with uncertainty, this isn't the time either for major policy changes. It would be very disruptive. Take a step back and reassess where revenue generation has gone, with the view to strengthening it in the interim. It should give city hall the opportunity to work on a plan to move things forward in an organized fashion.

Beyond contentment of resting happily on perennial menopausal *lamanana*, is there anything else under your sleeves worthy of consideration and disposition?

■■■

Budget cut: With a projected decrease in financial resources the local government has begun cutting cost of 10 percent across the board. Responsible call! Better employ prudent spending now while there's little left for basic needs.

The exit of investment from the Land of the Rising Sun doesn't leave much room to regain our financial posture. For all we know, it could be one difficult sunset as distant skies chase the rainbow gathering into serious financial rainstorm.

But it would be quite dry on our side of the horizon.

■■■

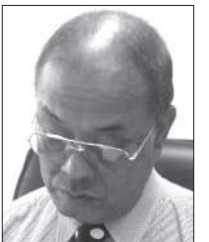
Training! In the process, the NMI works in concert with OSHA to train interested locals secure a set of skills for jobs opportunities ahead. It's a good effort on the part of the two agencies that ensure an eventual cadre of trained workers at home. It's a good start to hopefully attain gainful employment to bring home the bacon, so to speak.

Next is the issue of minimum wage parroting federal wage of \$7.25 an hour stretched out to play catch up. As we fiddle with this issue, there's also loose talk about "prevailing wage," perhaps mistakenly viewed synonymously with MW. The former stands at \$7.25 an hour, the latter anywhere near \$15-\$30 an

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.

Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the Saipan Tribune.



hour. Seems the NMI did everything except resolve basic issues that really matter.

The CW issue would turn history up ahead. As current workers under this category see their contracts expire, so does the law. How then does the NMI resolve labor requirements when the CW law expires? Who's really in charge ascertaining that the NMI trains its workforce? What happens to the immediate future in light of the impending changes?

So there's the economic slowdown from Yutu, Japanese visitors taking their luggage to airplanes going elsewhere, airline issues out of Japan and other markets, among others.

Yet we seem complacently mustering the requisite resolve to avert negative implications or hardship from changes in federal law. Something doesn't add up, not to mention the lack of solid plans to move the economy forward. No wonder the deafening echo from an unusual calm in *lamanana* land!

■■■






In her report to the Legislature, Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson said the revenue collection for fiscal year 2018 was \$140,817,579, which was lower than the original projection of \$145,260,125.

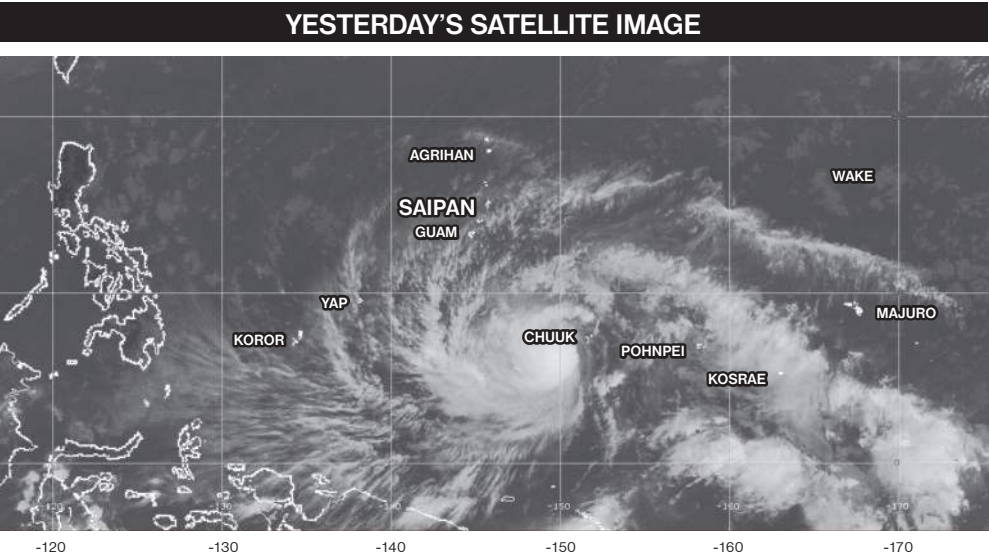
The expenditures totaled \$166,728,296, or \$22,692,654 over the budgeted allotment.

The revenue shortfall and over-expenditures resulted in a \$25,910,717 deficit, the report stated.

The revenue collection plus "other financing" in fiscal year 2018 totaled \$224,210,850, but Larson said this does not include revenues reserved for debt service and "transfers" to various earmarks as mandated by law.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY		TUESDAY	
									
Breezy. Mostly cloudy with isolated light showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.		Windy. Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. East winds 20 to 25 mph with gust to 35 mph.		Windy. Cloudy with numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms.		Very windy. Cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.		Very windy. Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	
87°	75°	86°	75°	87°	76°	86°	75°	86°	75°



PICTURE TIME: 9:41 AM, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2019
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Little change made to the forecast. Satellite and radar imagery show only a few clouds and showers over the local area. Relatively dry weather will prevail through Friday night with only a few isolated showers expected. Tropical Storm Wutip located about 655 miles southeast of Guam will move towards the Marianas. It is predicted to be near the local area this weekend. Expect scattered showers Saturday and Saturday night becoming numerous Sunday. Little change in wind speed expected for through Thursday night with speeds ranging between 20 to 25 mph. These winds are the result the pressure gradient between high pressure to the north of the Marianas and lower pressure to the south. Tropical Storm Wutip will deepen the pressure gradient and so even windier conditions are expected this weekend. The zones have been split as higher winds are expected over Guam and Rota and slightly lower winds over Tinian and Saipan.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorm	84° / 76°	
Palau	Cloudy	83° / 76°	
Yap	Cloudy	85° / 78°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorm	86° / 81°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorm	84° / 79°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorm	84° / 79°	
Majuro	Cloudy	83° / 79°	

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Rain	72° / 61°	
Beijing	Sunny	55° / 27°	
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	70° / 63°	
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	81° / 66°	
London	Partly Cloudy	61° / 43°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	61° / 43°	
Manila	Mostly Sunny	90° / 73°	
Melbourne	Sunny	77° / 55°	
Miami	Sunny	80° / 74°	
New York	Mostly Cloudy	47° / 33°	
Osaka	Showers	52° / 37°	
Paris	Partly Cloudy	61° / 37°	
Busan	Partly Cloudy	52° / 37°	
Rome	Mostly Sunny	63° / 39°	
Salem	Showers	75° / 59°	
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	53° / 44°	
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	52° / 25°	
Tokyo	Rain	50° / 36°	
Washington, DC	Cloudy	50° / 38°	



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
3:40 AM	LOW TIDE	-0.25	
10:03 AM	HIGH TIDE	2.09	
4:13 PM	LOW TIDE	0.55	
9:42 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.99	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:38 AM	6:22 PM
Saturday	6:38 AM	6:23 PM
Sunday	6:37 AM	6:23 PM
Monday	6:36 AM	6:23 PM
Tuesday	6:36 AM	6:23 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	8:39 AM	9:04 PM
Saturday	-	9:25 AM	10:01 PM
Sunday	-	10:09 AM	10:57 PM
Monday	-	10:54 AM	11:52 PM
Tuesday	-	11:39 AM	-

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 21, 2019							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA105	6:25pm	7:05pm	2, 4	UA104	4:50pm	5:31pm	2, 4
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:15am	6:30am	Daily	7C3452	9:35pm	2:00am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452	10:05pm	2:00am+1	1
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily	7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8648	6:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)				HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN			
JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1	JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4	JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)				GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6	3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)				BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7	MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	9:15am	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM	UA182/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	PR110/UA174	10:05pm	8:11am+1	Daily via GUM
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR	UA192/174	10:30pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:40pm	2 via GUM	UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM				
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7	UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UA117/159	9:15am	11:00pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM	UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA105/159	4:45pm	11:00pm	2, 4 via GUM	UA116/174	11:45pm	8:11am+1	2, 4 via GUM
				UA116/174	11:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily

1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily
TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

US delegation visits Kwajalein and Ebeye atolls

PALAU—A U.S. delegation from Washington, D.C. met yesterday with Republic of the Marshall Islands President Hilda Heine while on travel in the Republic of Palau.

Led by Doug Domenech, U.S. Department of the Interior assistant secretary, Insular and International Affairs, the group included U.S. Indo-Pacific Command official who visited Chuuk to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Operation Hailstone in the Pacific, visited President Tommy Remengesau in Palau, and concluded their trip to the Pacific on Kwajalein and Ebeye Atolls in the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

While meeting with Heine, Domenech and other members of the U.S. delegation had the opportunity to discuss various issues of mutual importance.

Domenech also presented Heine with \$1,178,148 in grant funding to support the Four Atoll Healthcare program. In December 2018, Domenech provided an initial

amount of \$392,716 for fiscal year 2019. The current grant represents the remaining funds for fiscal year 2019.

“We are proud of the history and cherish the relationships that Interior has had with the people of the Marshall Islands as part of the overall U.S.-RMI relationship,” said A Domenech of their trip. “Through the Compact of Free Association partnership, we have improved and built schools, hospitals, utilities, and numerous other programs throughout the Marshall Islands. We are strong partners through the U.S.-RMI Joint Economic Management and Fiscal Accountability Committee and we continue to have fruitful collaboration for the future through the Compact Trust Fund for the People of the Marshall Islands.”

The U.S. delegation concluded their trip to the three Freely Associated States—the three Pacific Island nations with whom the U.S. shares important relationships under

the Compacts of Free Association, with a final stop to Kwajalein and Ebeye atolls.

The principals of the U.S. delegation were met in the Marshall Islands by U.S. Ambassador to the Marshall Islands Karen Stewart and Marshall Islands Ambassador to the U.S. Gerald Zackios.

Aside from Domenech, the other members of the delegation were Gen. CQ Brown Jr., U.S. Air Force, commander, Pacific Air Forces; Indo-Pacific Command; Nick Dean, director, East Asia Pacific Bureau, State Department;



Doug Domenech, U.S. Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary, Insular and International Affairs; Gen. CQ Brown Jr., U.S. Air Force, commander, Pacific Air Forces; Indo-Pacific Command; Republic of the Marshall Islands President Hilda Heine; and RMI Foreign Minister John M. Silk.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Alexander Gray, director of Oceania, National Security Council; and Nikolao Pula, director, Office of Insular Affairs, Department of the Interior. (PR)



Doug Domenech, U.S. Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary, Insular and International Affairs, presents Republic of the Marshall Islands President Hilda Heine with grant funding to support the Four Atoll Healthcare program.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

LI, GUIHONG) FCD-DI
Petitioner,) CIVIL ACTION
vs.) NO. 19-0013
ZENG,)
ZHAOSHENG) SUMMONS FOR
Respondent,) PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE NAME RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is PMB, 538 Box 10003 Saipan MP, 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at P.O. Box 500307 Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 21 day of February, 2019

/s/ Clerk of Court

Harry Brian Blalock
P.O. Box 505502
(670) 287-1295
Pro se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of : FCD-AD-CIVIL
The Adoption Of: : ACTION NO.
E.H.B and W.H.B : 19-0073
Minor Child :
By: :
Harry Brian Blalock : NOTICE OF
Petitioner(s) : HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on 29th, day of April 2019 at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom MBP, before the Honorable Judge Kim-Tenorio

Dated this 8th day of Feb., 2019

/s/
By: Patrick V. Diaz,
Deputy Clerk of Court

ROBERT T. TORRES, ESQ.
Attorney at Law
P.O. Box 503758 CK
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel.: 234-7859
Fax: 234-5750
Attorney for Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK OF GUAM, : Civil Action No.
Plaintiff, : 18-0018 (R)
vs. :
EPHREM S. TAIMANAO :
and LUCIA M. : NOTICE OF
TAIMANAO, dba JOE : AUCTION
AND SONS : AND JUDICIAL
ENTERPRISES, : SALE
Defendants. : SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that under and by virtue of the Order Approving Judicial Sale of Mortgaged Property entered in the above titled action on February 15, 2019, by the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, to satisfy the amount found and adjudged due to Plaintiff Bank of Guam from Defendants Ephrem S. Taimanao and Lucia M. Taimanao, dba Joe and Sons Enterprises, the undersigned counsel or his designee will sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, on April 5, 2019, at 10:30 a.m., at the Rota Courthouse, Rota, the premises and real estate, lying and being on Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, described in said judgment, to wit:

Lot 345 R 200, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 345 R 05, the original of which was recorded 10 MAY 1984 as Document No. 84-751 at Commonwealth Recorder's, Saipan.

Terms and Conditions of Sale:
1. Public Sale. The auction shall be open to the general public.
2. With Reserve. The auction sale shall be held with reserve.
3. Rights and Duties of Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, the auctioneer or his designee shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the action sale:
a. to withdraw the property listed for sale in the public announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted;
b. to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
c. to reject any and all bids.
4. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for any and all of the property listed in the notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the property. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, or by telephone to Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: (670) 234-7859; Fax: (670) 234-5749; Email: rttlaw@pticom.com. Any person who submits his/her bid shall provide a copy of his/her valid Identification Card, or other legally acceptable form of identification. A written bid shall include the bidder's signature with his/her telephone number, mailing address, and any other contact information.
5. Deposit and Payment: A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. All payments must be made by cash, money order, or cashier's check. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title, and interest in any of the property, which will revert to Plaintiff Bank of Guam.
6. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and the Bank of Guam reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause shall be binding on any buyer by the constructive notice.
7. Inspection and No Warranty. Bidders are cautioned to inspect the title and property. Contact the Law Office of Robert T. Torres for scheduled viewing and inspection times. The interests of the property are being sold "AS IS" and without warranty. Failure to inspect the real property will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment, or rescission by any buyer. A copy of the appraisal report and other documents pertaining to the mortgaged property to be sold at public auction is available upon request. If necessary, a copy of the appraisal report will be provided to the Rota Bank of Guam Manager for Rota, for on-island bidders. DATED this 15th day of February, 2019.

/s/ Robert T. Torres, Auctioneer

ROBERT T. TORRES, ESQ.
Attorney at Law
P.O. Box 503758 CK
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel.: 234-7859 Fax: 234-5750
Attorney for Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK OF GUAM, :
Plaintiff, : Civil Action No.
vs. : 18-0019 (R)
EPHREM S. TAIMANAO :
and LUCIA M. : NOTICE OF
TAIMANAO, dba JOE : AUCTION
AND SONS : AND JUDICIAL
ENTERPRISES, : SALE
Defendants. : SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that under and by virtue of the Order Approving Judicial Sale of Mortgaged Property entered in the above titled action on February 15, 2019, by the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, to satisfy the amount found and adjudged due to Plaintiff Bank of Guam from Defendants Ephrem S. Taimanao and Lucia M. Taimanao, dba Joe and Sons Enterprises, the undersigned counsel or his designee will sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, on April 5, 2019, at 10:30 a.m., at the Rota Courthouse, Rota, the premises and real estate, lying and being on Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, described in said judgment, to wit:

Lot 010 R 20, containing an area of 929 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 010 R 00 dated March 06, 1974, as Document No. 3438 at Land Registry, Saipan, which was recorded on June 17, 1997 as Document No. 97-1467 at Commonwealth Recorder's, Saipan.

Terms and Conditions of Sale:
1. Public Sale. The auction shall be open to the general public.
2. With Reserve. The auction sale shall be held with reserve.
3. Rights and Duties of Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, the auctioneer or his designee shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the action sale:
a. to withdraw the property listed for sale in the public announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted;
b. to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
c. to reject any and all bids.
4. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for any and all of the property listed in the notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the property. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, or by telephone to Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: (670) 234-7859; Fax: (670) 234-5749; Email: rttlaw@pticom.com. Any person who submits his/her bid shall provide a copy of his/her valid Identification Card, or other legally acceptable form of identification. A written bid shall include the bidder's signature with his/her telephone number, mailing address, and any other contact information.
5. Deposit and Payment: A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. All payments must be made by cash, money order, or cashier's check. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title, and interest in any of the property, which will revert to Plaintiff Bank of Guam.
6. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and the Bank of Guam reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause shall be binding on any buyer by the constructive notice.
7. Inspection and No Warranty. Bidders are cautioned to inspect the title and property. Contact the Law Office of Robert T. Torres for scheduled viewing and inspection times. The interests of the property are being sold "AS IS" and without warranty. Failure to inspect the real property will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment, or rescission by any buyer. A copy of the appraisal report and other documents pertaining to the mortgaged property to be sold at public auction is available upon request. If necessary, a copy of the appraisal report will be provided to the Rota Bank of Guam Manager for Rota, for on-island bidders. DATED this 15th day of February, 2019.

/s/ Robert T. Torres, Auctioneer

COMMONWEALTH CASINO COMMISSION
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
P.O. Box 500237, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: 1 (670) 233-1857 • Fax: 1 (670) 233-1856
Email: info@cnmicasino.commission.com

AGENDA

Pursuant to the Open Government Act, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres, and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Commonwealth Casino Commission ("Commission"), hereby give notice that the Commission has scheduled a meeting on Wednesday, February 27, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at the Technology Room of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library (JKPL) in Susupe, Saipan.

The following Agenda will be discussed:

I. PRELIMINARIES:
A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Adoption of Agenda
D. Adoption of Minutes: January 30, 2019

II. REPORTS:
A. Report by the Chairman
B. Report by the Executive Director

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

IV. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS:
A. Casino Licensee (IPI) Updates:
1. Construction Progress – Imperial Pacific Resort & Hotel.
2. IPI Personnel – Status of RIF, Resident Employment Objectives, & CLA Annual Plan.
3. Responsible Gaming Program.
4. Compliance Committee.
5. Other Miscellaneous Matters.
B. Casino License Agreement Amendment No. 6: Construction Progress Monitoring.
C. Other Matters.

V. OLD BUSINESS:
A. CCC Personnel Regulations & Related Matters - Update

VI. NEW BUSINESS:
A. Approval of Regular Casino Key Employee License (2-years):
1. Mr. Chen, Xing Yu ("Ed") – Chief Financial Officer
2. Ms. Ho, Sao Kun ("Joanna") – Senior Vice President, Finance
B. Minimum Bankroll Requirements – Request for Temporary Suspension.
IPI CFO's Letter to the Commission, dated February 19, 2019. CCC Order 2018-004.
C. House Bill 21-11: "To clarify the powers of the Commonwealth Casino Commission and to make needed changes to the Commonwealth Code given the unique regulatory oversight of the Casino Industry in the Commonwealth; and for other purposes"
D. Notification of Provisional Non-Gaming Casino Vendor License (1-year):
1. Beijing Ding Shun An Management Consulting Co., Ltd. Project management and materials procurement-related services. Issued Date: 01/20/19; Expiration Date: 01/29/20.
2. Consolidated Transportation Services, Inc. (dba: CTSI Logistics). Shipping services and diesel supplier for construction and dormitory/staff housing. Issued Date: 01/30/19; Expiration Date: 01/29/20.
E. CCC Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Request.
F. Request to Withdraw Application for the Regular Casino Vendor License:
1. Grandland Group (CNMI), Limited. Letter of withdrawal from Jungui Fan, Vice President, dated October 10, 2018. Provisional License expired on 10/19/18.
2. Gold Mantis Construction Decoration (CNMI), LLC. Letter of withdrawal from Tiberius Mocanu, Counsel to Gold Mantis, dated February 6, 2019. Provisional License will expire 03/03/19.
G. Request to Withdraw Application for the Junket Operator License. TNT Group (CNMI), LLC. Letter of withdrawal from Trisha Moon, dated 08/16/18. No provisional license issued.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:
A. IPI Financial Matters
B. Report by the CCC Audit Division
C. Report by the Legal Counsel

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The Commission reserves the right to amend this agenda and take action on the amended agenda pursuant to 1 CMC §9910(b). Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Commission may vote to meet in Executive Session. In addition, the Commission may extend its official meeting for another day or more, if necessary.

Juan M. Sablan
Chairman

Business

Aid wars: US-Russia vie to ease Venezuelan crisis

MOSCOW (AP)—Call it the aid wars.

The Trump administration is accusing President Nicolas Maduro of starving Venezuelans by blocking tons of American-supplied humanitarian aid stored next door in Colombia.

In Russia, the Kremlin sees the opposition's plan to ram the aid across the border as a reckless pretext for ordering a U.S. military intervention.

As tensions in Venezuela mount ahead of a Saturday showdown over humanitarian aid, both sides are digging in, highlighting how the South American nation's crisis has become the latest fault line in a battle for global influence by the former Cold War adversaries.

At stake is the future of Venezuela, a once oil-rich country gripped by hyperinflation and widespread shortages of food and medicine. Opposition leader Juan Guaido last month declared himself the country's rightful president, a claim backed by the U.S. and dozens of other nations that argue Maduro's re-election last year was fraudulent because several opposition candidates were

barred from running.

Russia, long a staunch Maduro ally, has remained firmly behind the socialist leader.

Russian state news agencies said Wednesday that a Russian shipment of medicine and medical equipment had arrived in Venezuela. The reports did not give the size of the shipment or say what it contained, though they cited a diplomatic source as saying the delivery was made under the aegis of the World Health Organization.

Hours earlier Maduro had said 300 tons of medicine and other aid was on its way from Russia.

Carlos Romero, an international affairs professor at the Central University of Venezuela, said that Russia's support for Maduro is more symbolic than consequential when compared to the intense pressure against the government being exerted by the U.S. in what he called "Washington's backyard."

Still, he said the two global powers were on a collision course in Venezuela, making it harder to negotiate a de-escalation of tensions.

"The fate of Venezuela is in

the hands of outsiders," said Romero, who has advised Venezuela's opposition in the past. "It's like two trains heading toward one another on the same track and every day that passes they gain speed."

Guaido has called for "caravans" of tens of thousands of Venezuelans to join forces Saturday to carry the U.S. aid from Colombia into Venezuela, despite Maduro's objections and

the barricading of a key bridge linking Venezuela and the Colombian border city of Cucuta, where the aid is stored.

On Wednesday, Puerto Rico also announced it had dispatched a boat carrying 250 tons of aid earmarked for Venezuela, while Brazil's far-right government said it would send supplies to the jungled northern state of Roraima on Saturday as well. Neither said how

it expected to deliver the aid into Venezuela.

The Kremlin has compared the move to the deadly unrest movement in the Ukraine in 2013 that pushed out a pro-Russian president.

"If the organizers really want to just deliver some kind of humanitarian aid to the needy, why not use the specialized U.N. agencies that have extensive and inval-

able experience in carrying out such operations?" Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said in a statement.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov reaffirmed strong criticism of Washington's policy on Venezuela, saying Wednesday that calls this week by President Donald Trump on the Venezuelan military to drop support for Maduro represent a flagrant violation of international law.

As US pushes to ban Huawei, UK considers softer approach

LONDON (AP)—Britain can handle the security risks involved with using mobile networks made by China's Huawei, the cybersecurity chief said Wednesday, adding to a growing debate among countries on whether the company should be banned, as the U.S. wants.

Ciaran Martin, the CEO of the U.K. National Cyber Security Centre, said it was important to have "sustainable diversity" in the supply of telecommunications equipment. He added that his agency could handle the challenges involved in monitoring suppli-

ers who may not be considered trustworthy—a hint at Huawei.

Huawei, the world's biggest maker of switching gear for phone and internet companies, has faced rising scrutiny over U.S. allegations that it could be forced by the Chinese government to provide access to consumer data on its networks.

As countries roll out new high speed fifth generation, or 5G, mobile networks, they are seeking suppliers and the issue of whether to ban Huawei has become a heated debate.

Some frame it as a cold evaluation of the technical risks. Others see it as part of

a broader tussle between the U.S. and China for technological dominance. The U.S. has effectively blocked Huawei for years and is accusing China of stealing technology from foreign companies.

U.S. government officials including Vice President Mike Pence publicly warned European allies against using Huawei during a visit last week.


Authorities and telecom operators in countries such as Germany, Norway and the Czech Republic have been reassessing Huawei's role in 5G networks while Australia, New Zealand and Japan have

already moved to curb the use of its gear to varying degrees.

China has stridently defended Huawei, considered a crown jewel in its push to become a global technology power, and denounced security concerns as part of a U.S.-led plot to restrain the country's development.


"The United States and a few of its allies are using double standards and deliberately misleading the public on the issue," Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said Monday.

"It's hypocritical, immoral and unfair bullying behaviors," said Geng.



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS

CUC-IFB-19-006

KAGMAN WATERLINE AND BOOSTER STATION REHABILITATION

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Kagman Waterline and Booster Station Rehabilitation on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project consists, on the installation of a new booster station to replace the existing Kumoi pump station. The work also includes and connection of a new 8-inch PVC transmission line and a new 6-inch PVC distribution line complete with all necessary valves, fittings, and appurtenances. It will also involve the rehabilitation of the existing deep well KG-131 and the reconnection of all customers onto new or existing waterlines within the project area. The Contractor shall complete the work in accordance with the plans, specifications and terms of the contract.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEPA.

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **300 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **February 28, 2019 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Conference Room No.15, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk or USB Drive in PDF format must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-19-006- Kagman Waterline and Booster Station Rehabilitation", to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 21, 2019**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud.

Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The bid guarantee may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States, Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.


Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 7, 2019** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, at email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to LCDR Travis Spaeth, CUC Water/Wastewater Senior Engineer at email travis.spaeth@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, Procurement & Supply, Administrative Support Assistant at email christie.sablan@cucgov.org

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Office of the Executive Director



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CUC-RFP-19-008

SUPPLY OF FUEL FOR LIGHT VEHICLES AND HEAVY EQUIPMENT

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified vendors for the supply of fuel for light vehicles and heavy equipment for CUC Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The RFP Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 (non-refundable) for one RFP package set. The RFP package consisting of the specifications and scope-of-work will be emailed to all registered prospective proposers email ID. Prospective Proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division.

One (1) original and four (4) hard copies, along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk or USB Drive in PDF format must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-RFP-19-008 -Supply of Fuel for Light Vehicles and Heavy Equipment" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **March 4, 2019 at 10:00 AM (ChST)**. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

All Offeror are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Offeror are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page: <https://marianaslabor.net/>. The proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 15, 2019** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to John Mafnas, CUC Contract Specialist via email address john.mafnas@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrative Technician, Senior via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Nation

Muslim group seeks congressional probe on terror watchlist

FALLS CHURCH, Va. (AP)—A Muslim civil rights group called for a congressional investigation Wednesday after its lawsuit revealed that the U.S. government has shared access to parts of its terrorist watchlist with more than 1,400 private entities, including hospitals and universities.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations said Congress should look into why the FBI has given such wide access to the list, which CAIR believes is riddled with errors. Broad dissemination of the names makes life more difficult for those who are wrongly included, CAIR says. Many on the list are believed to be Muslim.

“This is a wholesale profiling of a religious minority community,” said CAIR National Executive Director Nihad Awad. “To share private information of citizens and non-citizens with corporations is illegal and outrageous.”

The FBI said in a statement Wednesday night that private groups only receive a subset of the terrorist watchlist called the Known or Suspected Terrorist List. It is unclear how significantly that narrows the list from the watchlist, which is formally known as the Terrorist Screening Center Database and includes hundreds of thousands of names.

Gadeir Abbas, lawyer for CAIR, said there is no evidence that the list of Known or Suspected Terrorists, or KST, is in any meaningful way less broad than the overall watchlist. Indeed, the articulated standard for inclusion on the watchlist is a reasonable suspicion of being a known or suspected terrorist.

“The FBI is using the complexity of the list to portray it as less nefarious than it is,” Abbas said.

The FBI statement says that any private agency accessing the list “must comply

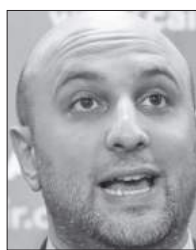
with agreements to ensure the security and confidentiality of the information. A requestor can only ask for information about a specific individual and cannot access all the data available in the KST File.” Any

private entity that comes into a contact with a match from the list is instructed to contact the FBI’s Terrorist Screening Center for further instructions, the FBI said.

The council filed a lawsuit in 2016 challenging the list’s constitutionality and saying those wrongly placed on it routinely face difficulties in travel, financial transactions and their dealings with law enforcement.

In response to the lawsuit, a federal official recently acknowledged in a court filing that more than 1,400 private entities received access to the list.

For years, the government



Abbas

had insisted that it did not generally share the list with private organizations.

A hearing is scheduled in federal court for Friday on CAIR’s request that the government now detail exactly which entities have received access to the names. CAIR also wants to know what private organizations are doing with the watchlist information—whether, for example, it is influencing universities’ admissions decisions or is being used by hospitals to screen would-be visitors.

In depositions and in court hearings, government officials had denied until very recently that the watchlist compiled by the FBI’s Terrorist Screening Center is shared with private entities. At a hearing in September, government lawyer Dena Roth told U.S. District Judge

Anthony Trenga that the Terrorist Screening Center “does not work with private partners, and that watchlist status itself ... is considered law enforcement sensitive information and is not shared with the public.”

Despite that assurance, the judge ordered the government to be more specific about how it disseminates the watchlist. Trenga said the plaintiffs are entitled to the information to try to prove their case that inclusion on the list causes them to suffer “real world consequences.”

In response to the judge’s order, TSC Deputy Director of Operations Timothy Groh filed a statement earlier this month acknowledging that 1,441 private entities have received permission to access the watchlist.

Groh said those entities must be in some way connected to the criminal justice system. He cited police forces

at private universities, hospital security staff and private correctional facilities as examples.

He said private groups are expected to abide by a detailed set of rules designed to ensure the list is used properly. It is not clear what those restrictions are.

The exact number of people on the list is kept secret by the government, but it acknowledged in an earlier lawsuit that it adds hundreds of thousands of names every year. It also emphasized that names are routinely removed.

Faiza Patel, a director at the New York University law school’s Brennan Center for Justice, said the government’s willingness to share the list with private organizations is problematic because the list has so many people who are wrongly included in the database.

“When you tag someone as a terrorist it can have serious consequences for people,” she said.

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB 19-CCC-055**

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 08, 2019 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

**“OFFICE SPACE RENTAL FOR THE
COMMONWEALTH CASINO COMMISSION”**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE LESSOR MUST COMPLY WITH PUBLIC LAW 15-23, ARTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A-D)

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ EDWARD DELEON GUERRERO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CCC

/S/ JOSEPH A. TUDELA
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP 19-CHCC/BUSINESS OFFICE-008**

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: March 4, 2019 TIME: 09:00AM

**“MEDICAL CODING TRAINING
BUSINESS OFFICE
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION”**

COPIES OF THE RFP PACKET MAY BE PICKED – UP AT CHCC PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY DIVISION-MEDICAL SUPPLY STORAGE FACILITY LOWER BASE SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ PRISCILLA M. IAKOPO
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP 19-CHCC/H.O.M.E VISITING-006**

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: March 1, 2019 TIME: 09:00AM

**“LEASED VEHICLE
H.O.M.E VISITING PROGRAM
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION”**

COPIES OF THE RFP PACKET MAY BE PICKED –UP AT CHCC PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY DIVISION-MEDICAL SUPPLY STORAGE FACILITY LOWER BASE SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ PRISCILLA M. IAKOPO
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

**Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION**

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.net

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairwoman of the Board, is hereby giving notice that the Regular Board Meeting is scheduled on Thursday, February 28, 2019- 10:00 a.m. at the NMHC Conference Room, Saipan. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in Advance.

- I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Roll Call
 - c. Adoption of Agenda
 - d. Adoption of Minutes (November 20, 2018)
- II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
- III. CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
 - a. Division Update Reports
 - b. CDBG-DR
- IV. OLD BUSINESS
 - a. Nelrod Salary Comparability Study
- V. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Proposal
 - b. USDA RD MOU
 - c. Lotus Homes Request for Additional Credits
 - d. Section 8 Admin Plan Amendment
 - e. Personnel Matters
- VI. LEGAL COUNSEL'S PENDING/ONGOING REPORT
- VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION
- VIII. OTHER MATTERS
- IX. ADJOURNMENT

(Notes: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13 (a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/ Aubry M. Hocog
Chairwoman of the Board

“NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency”

COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

San Jose Village • P.O. Box 502149 • Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. Nos: (670) 234-7145/7146/6293/6245 • Fax No.: (670) 235-7147
Website: www.developcnmi.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 8-41, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CDA) THRU ITS ACTING CHAIRMAN, HEREBY INFORMS THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE CDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING YESTERDAY AT 9:00 A.M. IS CANCELLED DUE TO LACK OF QUORUM. THE MEETING IS RESCHEDULED TODAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2019 AT 8:00 A.M. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE CDA CONFERENCE ROOM, FIRST FLOOR, CDA BUILDING, SAN JOSE VILLAGE, SAIPAN. THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING IS AS FOLLOWS:

AGENDA

- I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
 - A. Roll Call
 - B. Election of Officers
 - C. Adoption of Agenda
 - D. Adoption of Minutes
 1. November 19, 2018
- II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
- III. REPORTS
 - A. Executive Director's Report
 1. Administrative Matters
 - a. FY 2020 Budget
 - b. Personnel Matters
 2. Loan Matters
 3. Qualifying Certificate (QC) Program Matters/ Economic Development Activities
 - a. HCR Consulting LLC Proposal
 - b. MyPros Proposal
 - B. Comptroller's Report
- IV. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. Housing Financing
 - B. Agricultural Fair & Fishermen's Derby
 - C. CPA Resolution
- V. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. Post Modern Apprenticeship – Joint Participation Program
 - B. Pacific Basin Development council
 - C. Garapan Revitalization/ MFH Enterprises
- VI. OTHER MATTERS
- VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION
- VIII. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/ FRANK LEE SN. BORJA
Acting Chairman, CDA Board of Directors

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID
ADDENDUM NO. 1
ITB 19-DLNR/DFW-039**

**“BOAT CHARTER TRANSPORTATION SERVICES BETWEEN SAIPAN
AND ALAMAGAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND NATURAL
RESOURCES, DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE”**

Due to non-submission of the above mentioned ITB, the Secretary of DLNR would like to extend the bid opening for another week. Therefore, this addendum is issued to reschedule the bid submission and opening dates for on-island and off-island bidders.

► Sealed bid submittals for this project must be submitted with one (1) original and three (3) copies to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascension Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan no later than 09:30 a.m., local time, February 11, 2019 is changed to read **no later than 09:30 a.m., local time, February 28, 2019** and must be marked **ITB19-DLNR/DFW-039**.

► Bidders outside the Commonwealth must notify the Director of Procurement and Supply, in writing, of their intent to submit a Notice of Intent to Bid in order to receive this additional seven (7) working days for the receipt of the actual bid documents. This Notice of Intent to Bid may be any mode of written communication including facsimile to (670) 664-1515 or e-mailed to procurement@cnmidof.net but must be received no later than 09:30 a.m., local time, February 11, 2019 is changed to read **09:30 a.m., local time, February 28, 2019**.

► Bids submitted by firms outside the Commonwealth must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country by February 11, 2019 is changed to read **February 28, 2019** and mailed to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply to P.O. Box 510008, C.K., Saipan, MP 96950 and the bid documents must be received at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than February 20, 2019 is changed to read **no later than March 11, 2019**.

► Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascension Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, at 09:30 a.m., local time, February 22, 2019 is changed to read **09:30 a.m., local time, March 12, 2019**. However, if no Notice of Intent to Bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 09:30 a.m., local time, February 11, 2019 is changed to read **09:30 a.m., local time, February 28, 2019**.

The provisions of the CNMI Procurement Regulations, NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725 and 70-30.3-730 prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks, and Contingent Fees shall apply.

The CNMI Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids or portions thereof, and waive any immaterial defects if to do so would be in the best interest of the CNMI government.

/S/ MANNY PANGELINAN
SECRETARY OF DLNR

/S/ JOSEPH A. TUDELA
ACTING DIRECTOR OF P&S

End of Addendum No.1

Feds: Coast Guard lieutenant compiled hit list of lawmakers

WASHINGTON (AP)—A Coast Guard lieutenant who was arrested last week is a “domestic terrorist” who drafted an email discussing biological attacks and had what appeared to be a hit list that included prominent Democrats and media figures, prosecutors said in court papers.

Christopher Paul Hasson is due to appear Thursday in federal court in Maryland after his arrest on gun and drug offenses, but prosecutors say those charges are the “proverbial tip of the iceberg.”

“The defendant is a domestic terrorist, bent on commit-

ting acts dangerous to human life that are intended to affect governmental conduct,” prosecutors wrote in court papers.

Hasson, who works at the Coast Guard’s headquarters in Washington, has espoused extremist views for years, according to prosecutors. Court papers detail a June 2017 draft email in which Hasson wrote that he was “dreaming of a way to kill almost every last person on the earth,” and pondering how he might be able to acquire anthrax and toxins to create botulism or a deadly influenza.

In the same email, Has-

son described an “interesting idea” that included “biological attacks followed by attack on food supply” as well as a bombing and sniper attacks, according to court documents filed by prosecutors.

In September 2017, Hasson sent himself a draft letter that he had written to a neo-Nazi leader and “identified himself as a White Nationalist for over 30 years and advocated for ‘focused violence’ in order to establish a white homeland,” prosecutors wrote.

Hasson routinely read portions of a manifesto written by Norwegian mass murderer

Anders Behring Breivik that prosecutors said instructs would-be assailants to collect firearms, food, disguises and survival tools, court papers said. Breivik, a right-wing extremist, is serving a 21-year sentence for killing 77 people in a 2011 bomb-and-shooting rampage.

Hasson also expressed admiration for Russia. “Looking to Russia with hopeful eyes or any land that despises the west’s liberalism,” he wrote in the draft email. Prosecutors say during the past two years he had regularly searched online for pro-Russian as well as

neo-Nazi literature.

Prosecutors allege that Hasson visited thousands of websites that sold guns and researched military tactical manuals on improvised munitions.

Federal agents found 15 firearms — including several rifles — and over 1,000 rounds of ammunition inside Hasson’s basement apartment in Silver Spring, Maryland. They also found a container with more than 30 bottles that were labeled as human growth hormone, court papers said.

Prosecutors wrote that Hasson “began the process of targeting specific victims,”

including several prominent Democrats in Congress and 2020 presidential candidates. In February 2018, he searched the internet for the “most liberal senators,” as well as searching “do senators have ss (secret service) protection” and “are supreme court justices protected,” according to the court filing.

Hasson’s list of prominent Democrats included House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and presidential hopefuls Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand, Elizabeth Warren, Cory Booker and Kamala Harris.



This image provided by the U.S. District Court in Maryland shows a photo of firearms and ammunition that was in the motion for detention pending trial in the case against Christopher Paul Hasson.

ACROSS THE NATION

GOP’s Collins would back resolution criticizing emergency SOUTH PORTLAND, Maine

(AP)—Sen. Susan Collins said Wednesday that she would vote for a congressional resolution disapproving of President Donald Trump’s emergency declaration to build a wall on the southern border, becoming the first Republican senator to publicly express support for such a measure. The lawmaker from Maine said she would vote for a resolution as long as it focused only on the declaration. The president’s action “completely undermines” the role of Congress and is of “dubious constitutionality,” she said, while attending a Coast Guard ceremony. “If it’s a ‘clean’ disapproval resolution, I will support it,” she said. Trump declared an emergency last week to obtain funding for the wall beyond the \$1.4 billion Congress approved for border security. He has said he had a right to make the declaration in an effort to secure the border. Trump’s use of the emergency declaration has drawn bipartisan criticism, and 16 states have filed a lawsuit against the declaration.

Utah man charged with hate crimes in attack on Mexicans

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—A Utah man who authorities say shouted that he wanted to “kill Mexicans” before attacking three Latinos at a tire shop in Salt Lake City was charged Wednesday with a hate crime by U.S. Department of Justice. Alan Dale Covington, 50, attacked the victims with a 3-foot metal pole last November, leaving 18-year-old Luis Lopez with serious head wounds after he tried to defend his father, who was hit in the shoulder as he ran away. The incident on Nov. 27, 2018, triggered renewed criticism of the Utah’s state hate crimes law,

which doesn’t protect specific groups. County prosecutors have said the law is essentially unusable. Covington was charged with assault in state court but not a hate crime because Salt Lake County Attorney District Attorney Sim Gill said the law doesn’t apply to felony crimes. A legislative proposal to strengthen the hate-crimes law is under consideration this session. Covington, indicted on three counts of hate crimes, doesn’t have an attorney listed in court records. His public legal defender representing him on state charges didn’t immediately return a phone message.

Mormon church won’t oppose gay conversion therapy ban

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—The Mormon church won’t stand in the way of a proposal to ban gay conversion therapy for minors in its home base of Utah, leaders said Wednesday, a position that advocates heralded as a milestone in the conservative state. The announcement is key in part because LGBT members have historically reported that church leaders encouraged them to attend therapy aimed at changing their sexual orientation, said Troy Williams with the group Equality Utah. “We are grateful that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints recognizes the harms of conversion therapy and has denounced the practice,” he said. Moreover, most members of the Utah Legislature are members of the church, and its positions can hold outsized sway. Supporters of the proposal have worked with the church to address concerns about religious freedom and make sure that counseling in line with church teachings on marriage and sexuality won’t come under the proposed ban, said Marty Stephens, a lobbyist for the church.

Girl’s death haunted police until arrest made 45 years later

SANTA ANA, Calif. (AP)—Investigators searched for decades for the killer of an 11-year-old girl who disappeared while walking home from summer school in a case that gripped a California seaside community.

A photo of a smiling Linda O’Keefe has hung for years on the wall of the police department in Newport Beach, reminding investigators to keep pressing forward on cold cases like hers.

More than four decades later, authorities in Southern California said Wednesday that a Colorado man has been arrested and charged with killing her in 1973. The announcement came the same day authorities said they charged a man with killing an 11-year-old boy near Los Angeles in 1990.

In Linda’s case, authorities said they got a hit last month from a genealogical database that matched a DNA sample taken when her body was found strangled in a ditch a day after she went missing. Increasingly, investigators have found

a powerful tool in databases made up of DNA samples submitted by people seeking to learn about their ancestry.

“The detectives dogged this case,” Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer told reporters, declining to say whether the suspect or his relatives submitted DNA for genealogical purposes. “We have every opportunity in the world to solve so many of these cold cases that we never had hope in the past of solving.”

James Neal, 72, was arrested in Colorado Springs, Colorado, on Tuesday and charged with murder with special circumstances, Spitzer said.

“He seemed like a good guy,” Neal’s landlord, Michael Thulson, told the Colorado Springs Gazette. “I had no indication he was capable of anything even 10 steps less than this, which just shows you what you don’t know.”

Neal’s son-in-law told the newspaper that the family was

not ready to comment. It was not immediately clear if Neal had an attorney who could speak on his behalf, and the voicemail was full on a number listed for him.

Neal was due to appear in court in Colorado on Thursday.

In Los Angeles County, authorities said Edward Donell Thomas, 50, has been charged in connection with kidnapping and killing William Tillett. The boy disappeared in 1990 while walking home from school in Inglewood, and his body was found in a dark carport later that day. The coroner determined he had been suffocated.

A combination of old evidence and “advanced technology” led to Thomas, Inglewood Police Chief Mark Fronterotta told reporters without releasing details.

Fronterotta said investigators don’t believe Thomas acted alone. He and the boy’s brother urged anyone with information to come forward.

“I just want to keep the mo-

mentum going” so the family can have closure, Hubert Tillett said.

The police chief was on the force at the time and said the case left “an indelible mark in my mind, in my heart.”

Thomas was being held without bail, and it wasn’t known if he had an attorney. His arraignment is scheduled for April 4.

In Newport Beach, O’Keefe was walking home from summer school in July 1973 when she vanished. She was last seen talking to a stranger in a van and never made it home, police Chief Jon Lewis said.

Her family and friends searched for her and called police. The next morning, her body was found.

Authorities said they never gave up the search for her killer, even after decades passed and her parents had died. The suspect’s DNA profile was uploaded to a criminal database in 2001 but there were no hits for years, authorities said.

Asia

Fire in old part of Bangladesh's capital kills at least 70

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—A devastating fire raced through densely packed buildings in an old part of Bangladesh's capital and killed at least 70 people, officials and witnesses said Thursday.

The fire in Dhaka was mostly under control after more than nine hours of frantic efforts by firefighters. Some of the about 50 people injured were critically burned.

The Chawkbazar area is crammed with buildings separated by narrow alleys. The neighborhood is a mix of residential and commercial, with buildings that commonly have shops, restaurants or warehouses on the ground floors.

The blaze started late Wednesday night in one building but quickly spread to others, fire department Director General Brig. Gen. Ali Ahmed said.

The death toll rose to 70, with many of the victims trapped inside the buildings, said Mahfuz Riben, a control room official of the Fire Service and Civil Defense in Dhaka.

"Our teams are working there but many of the recovered bodies are beyond recognition. Our people are using



body bags to send them to the hospital morgue, this is a very difficult situation," he told AP by phone.

Some floors of the destroyed buildings had chemicals and plastic in storage.

Most buildings in the neighborhood are used both for residential and commercial purposes despite warnings of the potential for high fatalities from fires after one had killed at least 123 people in 2010.

Authorities had promised to bring the buildings under regulations and remove chemical warehouses from the residential buildings.

Such tragedies are shockingly common in Bangladesh, where fires, floods, ferry sinkings and other disasters regularly claim

dozens of lives or more.

In 2012, a fire raced through a garment factory on the outskirts of Dhaka, killing at least 112 people trapped behind its locked gates. Less than six months later, another building housing garment factories collapsed, killing more than

AP
Locals and firefighters gather around buildings that caught fire late Wednesday in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2019.

1,100 people.

The death toll from the latest fire could still rise as the condition of some of the injured people was critical, said Samanta Lal Sen, head of a burn unit of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Sen said at least nine of the critically injured people were being treated in his unit.

Witnesses told local TV stations that many gas cylinders stored in the buildings continued to explode one after another. They said the fire also set off explosions in fuel tanks of some of the vehicles that got stuck in traffic in front of the destroyed buildings.

Some reports suggested many of the dead were pedestrians, shoppers or diners who died quickly as several gas cylinders exploded, and the fire engulfed the nearby buildings very quickly.

Officials said the firefighters struggled to get close to the scene because of heavy traffic and narrow alleys that were busy when the fire started.

Vietnam, site of next Trump-Kim summit, model for growth

BANGKOK (AP)—Vietnam, the location of President Donald Trump's next meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, has come a long way since the U.S. abandoned its war against communist North Vietnam in the 1970s.

United into a youthful nation that now numbers 95 million, beginning in the mid-1980s the country embraced global trade to become a production base for South Korea's Samsung and many other manufacturing giants. The "Doi Moi" reforms adopted by its communist rulers, modeled largely on China's transformation into the world's factory floor, could provide a model for North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

GOING FOR GROWTH: The Vietnamese economy expanded at an estimated annual rate of just above 7 percent in 2018, fueled by a double-digit increase in manufacturing output. At 5.54 quadrillion Vietnamese dong (\$238 billion in 2017), its GDP ranks in the world's top 50 economies. As the economy has grown, poverty rates have fallen and life expectancy has risen, to 76 years.

SAMSUNG FACTOR: Heavy investment by South Korea's Samsung Electron-

ics, the world's biggest maker of computer chips and cell phones, led commitments by other big global manufacturers like Microsoft and Intel. Samsung opened Vietnam's first mobile phone plant in 2009 and now employs more than 100,000 people in its factories there. In 2017, the company accounted for more than a quarter of Vietnam's total exports. Samsung said it had no comment on speculation that Kim might visit one of its factories outside the capital Hanoi, where he is to meet with Trump.

EXPORT BONANZA: By joining the World Trade Organization and regional groupings including the Pacific Rim accord called the Trans-Pacific Partnership, Vietnam has leapfrogged its neighbors in taking advantage of lowered tariffs, and its exports have soared. In the meantime, manufacturers from South Korea, Japan and China have crowded in to take advantage of lower costs and other incentives. Exports surged to \$214 billion in 2017, up by more than a fifth from the year before. The U.S. is Vietnam's largest export market, at nearly \$42 billion in 2017. It's not all cell phones: Vietnam's main

exports also include electronics, shoes and apparel.

CHALLENGES: Having just barely reached middle-income status, Vietnam is struggling to raise productivity—the key to ensuring living standards will continue to improve. Economists say the country's productivity is only about a third of China's and much lower than in affluent countries. Heavy reliance on export-led growth leaves the country vulnerable to global downturns. Vietnamese leaders also have emulated China in keeping a tight grip on the media, political dissent and other freedoms. Rural poverty, pollution and corruption are serious concerns, and like its huge neighbor to the north, Vietnam is struggling to revamp state-dominated industries that are a legacy of the earlier era of central planning.

THE OUTLOOK: After years of absorbing large flows of foreign investment Vietnam could see that flow taper off along with global cutbacks. To sustain growth and remain competitive, the country needs to give a freer rein to private businesses, the World Bank and other experts say, and encourage adoption of more advanced technologies.

Powerful political leader warns against squandering peace

HERAT, Afghanistan (AP)—A prominent Afghan political leader who once had the support of some officials to lead Afghanistan's negotiating team with the Taliban, warned the president Wednesday against squandering the best opportunity at peace in more than 17 years of war.

In an interview with The Associated Press, former Cabinet minister Ismail Khan said "the Taliban are ready to find a solution that is good for every Afghan," but they steadfastly refuse to talk with the Afghan government alone, saying the government is a U.S. "puppet."

Suhail Shaheen, a spokesman for the Taliban's office in the Middle Eastern state of Qatar, said the Taliban negotiation team will hold its next round of talks with Washington's peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad on Monday. The Taliban have been negotiating with the U.S. to end America's longest war, which has cost it more than \$1 trillion.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, who has been demanding his government lead all peace talks with the Taliban, rejected a meeting between the Taliban and a large gathering of prominent Afghan figures, including former Presi-

dent Hamid Karzai and Khan, in Moscow earlier this month.

"Afghan mujahedeen, Afghan intellectuals, elders and politicians, including the Afghan government should start talks with the Taliban," to find a negotiated end to the war that would allow the U.S. to withdraw its forces, said Khan, who spoke to the AP from Afghanistan's western city of Herat.

Khan, who served in Karzai's government, was a jihadi leader during the 1980s U.S.-backed war against the former Soviet Union. He was among those mujahedeen leaders who became politicians after the Taliban took control of the country.

Meanwhile, Ghani's peace envoy Omer Daudzai on Wednesday sought to reassure a gathering of women and human rights activists in the Afghan capital Kabul with a promise to hold a Loya Jirga, or gathering of political and tribal leaders, in mid-March to lay out lines in the sand the Afghan government won't cross when it eventually enters talks with the Taliban.

The Taliban ruled Afghanistan under a harsh form of Islamic law from 1996 until the U.S.-led invasion following the Sept. 11 attacks. Many fear that a peace agreement with the Taliban will erode the faltering prog-

ress made since their ouster.

One contentious red line for President Ghani has been the holding of presidential elections in July. Daudzai said July presidential polls were non-negotiable. Yet even Khalilzad has expressed reservations about elections as all sides seek to find a way toward peace.

Khan outright rejected elections, saying polls held as peace talks are underway will undermine negotiations ensuring it would be impossible for the Taliban to participate.

Instead, Khan supported an interim set up, which the religious movement has also reportedly supported in talks with Khalilzad. Khan said an interim government could govern for six months to one year while the country prepares for polls.

Meanwhile, Daudzai said the Americans and the Taliban had agreed in principle on the withdrawal of U.S. troops, but only after a peace deal is reached with popular support.

However, President Donald Trump has expressed his frustration with America's continued participation and there have been reports that the United States is making plans to withdraw half of its troops by the summer.

World

Deadly crackdown stokes fear among protesters in Venezuela

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Jhonny Godoy had taken to Twitter to proclaim his opposition to President Nicolas Maduro, posting a video that showed him running through the streets waving the national flag as protests erupted across Venezuela's capital.

Two days later, his family said, rifle-wielding special police agents wearing black masks stormed into their home in the Caracas slum of La Vega, pulled him outside and shot him to death.

The slaying of the 29-year-old was part of a crackdown

that has spread fear among young protesters in poor neighborhoods of Venezuela, where a history of steadfast loyalty to Maduro has begun to crack amid hyperinflation and shortages of food and medicine. At least 43 people have been killed in the round of protests that began last month, when Juan Guaido, the head of the opposition-controlled congress, declared himself interim president of the crisis-racked country.

Human rights groups say some of those deaths appear to be targeted slayings by the Na-

tional Police Action Force, or FAES, an elite commando unit created in 2017 for anti-gang operations. Rights groups say it is now acting against disaffected youths living in the slums.

"Maduro seeks to sow fear," said Rafael Uzcategui, coordinator of the respected rights group Venezuelan Education-Action Program on Human Rights, known as PROVEA.

More than 770 opponents of Maduro have been arrested during the latest push by Venezuela's opposition to oust the socialist leader, according to a

report published Wednesday by Amnesty International, which calls on the United Nations Human Rights Council to take action against those responsible for the crackdown.

"The authorities are trying to use fear and punishment to impose a repulsive strategy of social control against those who demand change," said Erika Guevara-Rosas, Americas director at Amnesty. "His government is attacking the most impoverished people that it claims to defend, but instead it murders, detains and threatens them."

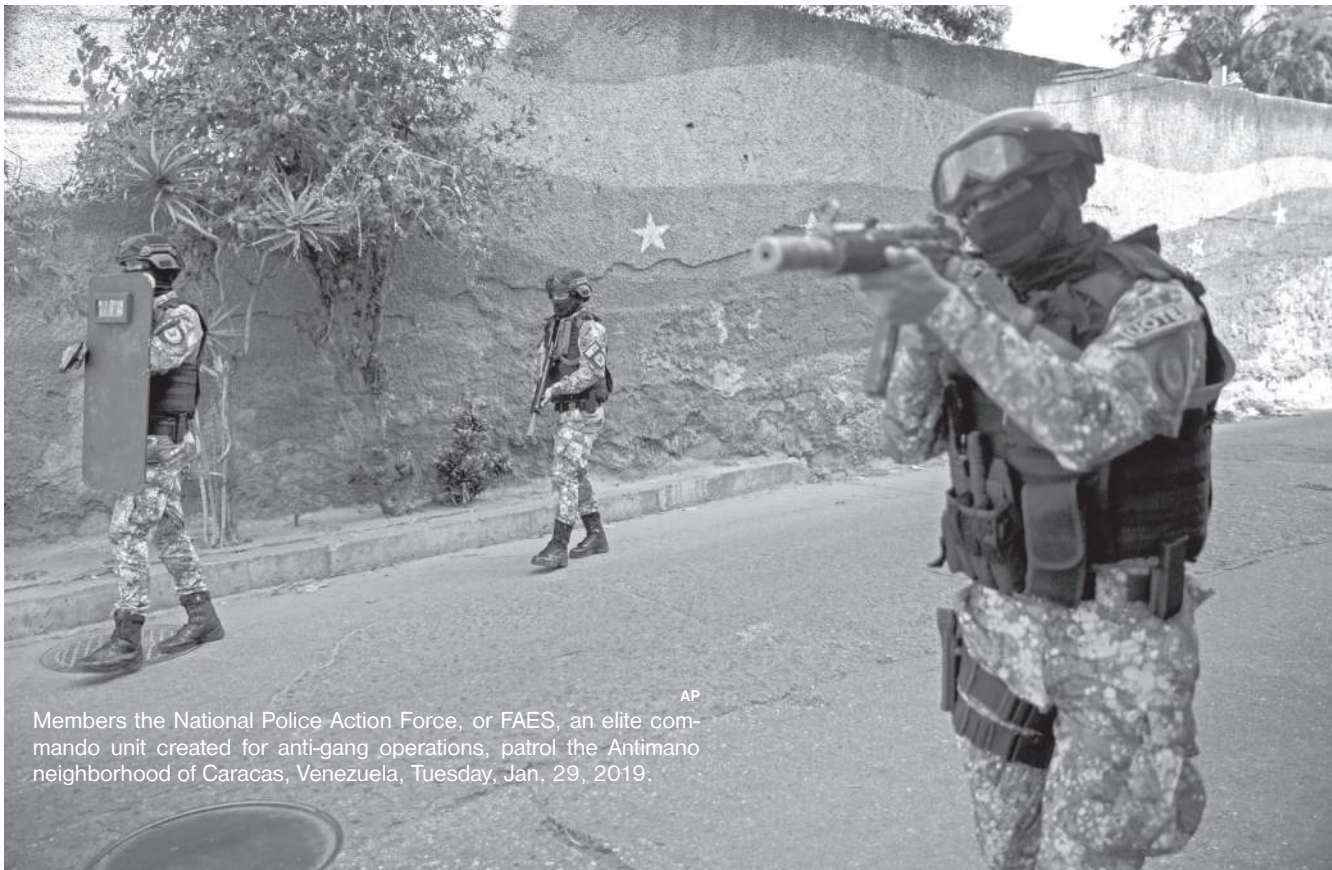
Maduro is facing more pressure than ever to cede power in the oil-rich nation. The Trump administration recently sanctioned Venezuela's state-owned oil company, squeezing the country's damaged economy even harder, and Guaido has been recognized as the country's rightful leader by the U.S. and dozens of other nations that argue Maduro's re-election to a second six-year term last year was fraudulent. A new round of sanctions Friday targeted four high-ranking intelligence officials, including the heads of the FAES commando unit and the feared SEBIN intelligence police.

The country has seen the largest protests since 2017, when 120 people died in clashes with national guards-

men and pro-government civilians who fired on the masked demonstrators in middle-class neighborhoods. Now, critics say, Maduro is hitting back by sending security forces into the slums to try to suppress dissent.

PROVEA and Observatory say they recorded 35 deaths during a single week in January—most at night in poor neighborhoods—in addition to eight cases of apparent targeted killings by members of the elite commando unit.

Godoy's cousin, Marvelis Sinai, said that when agents burst into the family's home on Jan. 25, Godoy's mother Ana Buitrago saw her son beaten and dragged out as she begged for his life. Minutes later, she heard two gunshots.



AP
Members the National Police Action Force, or FAES, an elite commando unit created for anti-gang operations, patrol the Antimano neighborhood of Caracas, Venezuela, Tuesday, Jan. 29, 2019.

Civilians, including many children, leave IS-held enclave

BAGHOUS, Syria (AP)—Young girls and boys stared out of the back of trucks, their faces dirty, their eyes filled with terror, exhaustion and uncertainty, as hundreds of men, women and children were evacuated from the Islamic State group's last enclave in eastern Syria on Wednesday. The evacuation may signal an imminent end to the territorial rule of the militants self-declared "caliphate" that once stretched across much of Syria and Iraq.

Their condition pointed to the squalor that IS has been reduced to in the tiny tent camp on the banks of the Euphrates River. Food and water have been running out in the pocket, where some 300 IS militants along with hundreds of civilians—believed to be mostly their families—have been under siege for more than a week by U.S.-backed forces. Conditions have been so bad that at least 60 people previously evacuated from the militants' shrinking territory subsequently died of malnutrition or exhaustion.

The U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces surrounding the patch of land have been unable to carry out a final assault on it because of the presence of the civilians. It was unclear how after days of militants preventing civilians from leaving, the organized evacuation of hundreds was possible. SDF officials did not say how many were in the convoy or how many remain in the pocket.

Adnan Afrin, an SDF spokesman, said a number

of IS fighters were hiding among the civilians evacuating the enclave and were later arrested. He didn't elaborate.

SDF officials said clashes overnight, airstrikes and special operations facilitated the movement of the hundreds of civilians toward exits already designated by the SDF and trucks that had already been sent for evacuation. Witnesses said there were overnight strikes in the enclave. SDF officials said earlier that some militants asked for an exit, a request they declined. Instead, they said a military operation would follow the evacuation and separation of civilians.

The enclave's recapture by U.S.-backed Syrian fighters would spell the territorial defeat of IS and allow President Donald Trump to begin withdrawing American troops from northern Syria, as he has pledged to do, opening a new chapter in Syria's eight-year civil war.

Few believe, however, that ending the group's territorial rule will end the threat posed by an organization that still stages and inspires attacks through sleeper cells in both Syria and Iraq.

In past weeks, nearly 20,000 have walked for hours through a humanitarian corridor to exit the militants' last patch of territory along the river. Many paid smugglers and some have come under fire from the militants for attempting to leave. Evacuations had been halted last week when the militants closed all the roads out of the tiny area.

Pope strives to fight cleric sex abuse with Vatican summit

VATICAN CITY (AP)—If Pope Francis needed a concrete example to justify summoning church leaders from around the globe to Rome for a tutorial on clergy sex abuse, Sister Bernardine Pemii has it.

The nun, who recently completed a course on child protection at Rome's Jesuit university, has been advising her bishop in Ghana on an abuse case, instructing him to invite the victim to his office to hear her story before opening an investigation. But what if Pemii hadn't stepped in?

"It would have been covered (up). There would have been complete silence," Pemii told The Associated Press. "And nothing would have happened. Nobody would have listened to the victim."

Starting Thursday, Francis is convening a summit at the Vatican to prevent cover-ups of sex abuse by Catholic superiors everywhere. The gathering comes as many Catholic bishops and authorities around

the world still try to protect the church's reputation at all costs, denying that priests rape children and discrediting victims even as new abuse cases keep coming to light.

Francis, history's first Latin American pope, has made many of the same mistakes. As archbishop in Buenos Aires, he went out of his way to defend a famous street priest who was later convicted of abuse. He also took a handful of measures early on in his papacy that undermined progress the Vatican had made in taking a hard line against rapists.

These include the pontiff publicly botching a well-known sex abuse cover-up case in Chile by initially giving it no credence. But Francis realized last year he had erred. "I was part of the problem," Francis told Chilean survivor Juan Carlos Cruz during a private meeting at the Vatican in June.

The pope has now done an about-face and is bringing the rest of the church leadership

along with him at the extraordinary summit. Some 190 presidents of bishops' conferences, religious orders and Vatican offices are gathering for four days of lectures and workshops on preventing sex abuse in their churches, tending to victims and investigating abuse when it does occur.

The Vatican isn't expecting any miracles, and the pope himself has called for expectations to be "deflated." But organizers say the meeting marks a turning point in the way the Catholic Church has dealt with the problem, with Francis' own conversion last year a key point of departure.

"I have been impressed by the humility of the Holy Father," said Maltese Archbishop Charles Scicluna, the Vatican sex crimes investigator who helped set Francis straight on Chile. "He's ready to say 'I got that wrong. We're not going to do it again. We're going to do it right.'"

"I think that gives us great

hope," Scicluna said.

But the challenges are daunting as the message trickles down slowly.

Just this week, the online research group BishopAccountability released statistics from eight of the largest Catholic countries in the world, with the bishops from only one country—the U.S.—committing to a policy to permanently remove any priest who has sexually abused a child.

Bishops in some countries, including Brazil, don't even have a published abuse policy to speak of. In Italy, the president of the bishops' conference met with abuse victims for the first time last week—but only after summit organizers demanded it.

"I want to say that something important is going to come out of the week, but based on research we've done, I believe this church is nowhere close to enacting the reforms it must make to stop this epidemic," said BishopAccountability's Anne Barret Doyle.

Focus

Before multiculturalism, blackface rampant in US pop culture

AP
In this Jan. 18, 1987, photo, Atlanta city councilman, Rev. Hosea Williams, in overalls, leads a march against efforts to keep Forsyth County in Georgia all white past counter-protesters near Cumming, Ga., as a crowd waves Confederate flags and jeer the marchers. Racial stereotypes and racist imagery in popular culture seemed to be everywhere in the chaotic 1980s when future Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam and future Attorney General Mark Herring admitted dressing up in blackface.

By **RUSSELL CONTRERAS**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

At the time Virginia's future political leaders put on blackface in college for fun, Dan Aykroyd wore it too—in the hit 1983 comedy “Trading Places.”

Sports announcers of that time often described Boston Celtics player Larry Bird, who is white, as “smart” while describing his black NBA opponents as athletically gifted.

Such racial insensitivities ran rampant in popular culture during the 1980s, the era in which Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam and the state's attorney general, Mark Herring, have admitted to wearing blackface as they mimicked pop singer Michael Jackson and rapper Kurtis Blow, respectively.

Meanwhile, Chicago elected its first black mayor, Michael Jackson made music history with his “Thriller” album, U.S. college students protested against South Africa's racist system of apartheid and the stereotype-smashing sitcom “The Cosby Show” debuted on network television.

It would be another 10 years before the rise of multiculturalism began to change America's racial sensibilities, in part because intellectuals and journalists of color were better positioned to successfully challenge racist images, and Hollywood began to listen.

“We are in a stronger position to educate the American public about symbols and cultural practices that are harmful today than we were in the 1980s,” said Henry Louis Gates Jr., director of the Hutchins Center for African & African American Research at Harvard University.

During the '80s, college faculties and student bodies were less diverse, Gates said. Some scholars who entered college during the 1960s had yet to take on roles in which mainstream culture would heed their cultural critiques, he said.

At the time Northam and Herring put on black makeup, Hollywood and popular culture still sent messages that racial stereotypes and racist imagery were comical and harmless, despite pleas from civil rights groups and black newspapers.

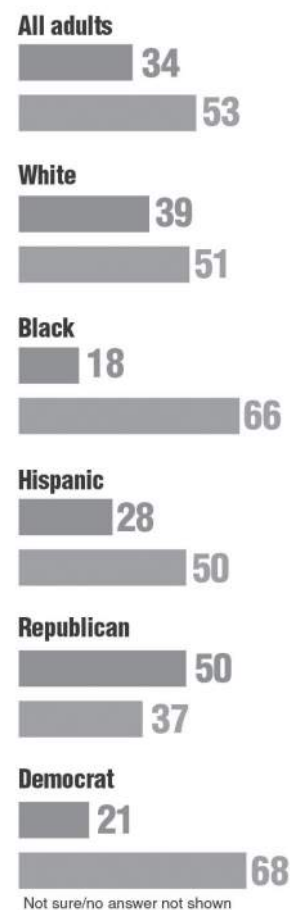
Herring was a 19-year-old University of Virginia student when he wore brown makeup and a wig to look like rapper Kurtis Blow at a 1980 party. Three years before that, white actor Gene Wilder darkened his face with shoe polish in the movie “Silver Streak” co-starring Richard Pryor. He used a stereotypical walk to impersonate a black person living in an urban neighborhood.

On television, viewers could see a Tom and Jerry cartoon featuring the character Mammy Two Shoes, an obese black maid who spoke in a stereotypical voice. The 1940s cartoon series was shown across several markets throughout the 1980s. Television stations ignored complaints from civil

Halloween and blackface

% saying they personally think that a white person using makeup to darken their skin so they appear to be a different race as part of a Halloween costume is ...

- Acceptable
- Not acceptable



Source: Pew Research Center
Graphic: Staff, TNS

rights groups.

rights groups.

Elsewhere, Miami erupted into riots following the acquittal of white police officers who killed black salesman and retired Marine Arthur McDuffie in what many called a case of police brutality. President Jimmy Carter visited and pressed for an end to the violence, but a protester threw a bottle at his limousine as he left.

When Northam wore blackface to imitate Michael Jackson and copy his moonwalking skills at a 1984 San Antonio dance contest, television stations still aired Looney Tunes episodes with racially insensitive images using Bugs Bunny and other characters despite some controversial episodes being taken off the air in 1968.

African-Americans, however, had reason to be hopeful amid electoral gains. A year before, in 1983, Chicago became the latest city to elect a black mayor, Harold Washington, after activists registered 100,000 new black voters. That election, Jesse Jackson later said, paved the way for him to seek the Democratic nomination for president in 1984.

“It was out of that context that my own candidacy emerged,” Jackson said in the 1990 “Eyes on the Prize” documentary. Jackson lost the nomination to former Vice President Walter Mondale.

Two years after Northam's moonwalk performance, the comedy “Soul Man” hit theaters. In the movie, Mark Watson, played by white actor C.

Thomas Howell, takes tanning pills in a larger dose to appear African-American so he can obtain a scholarship meant for black students at Harvard Law School. The movie drew a strong reaction from the NAACP and protesters to movie theaters.

Still, “Soul Man” took in around \$28 million domestically, equivalent to around \$63.5 million today.

Despite those images, new and popular black cultural figures also emerged, including Eddie Murphy, Oprah Winfrey and a young Michael Jordan. Black Entertainment Television, or BET, was founded in 1980 by businessman Robert L. Johnson, giving the country access to black entertainment using 1970s sitcoms and music.

But as Nelson George argued in his book “Post-Soul Nation: The Explosive, Contradictory, Triumphant and Tragic 1980s as Experienced by African Americans,” BET failed to counter negative images by relying on free music videos and investing little money in original programming. “Through this conservative strategy, BET prospered while offering little new to a community starved for images of itself,” George wrote.

In addition, the new black cultural figures rarely engaged in politics or spoke out against racial injustice.

Sometimes, stereotypes and comments did result in consequences. For example, CBS fired sports commentator Jim-

my Snyder, known as Jimmy the Greek, in 1988 after he suggested in a television interview that black athletes were better because of slavery. The Los Angeles Dodgers fired general manager Al Campanis in 1987 for saying on ABC's “Nightline” that blacks “may not have some of the necessities to be, let's say, a field manager or perhaps a general manager” and they were poor swimmers.

In 1987, black demonstrators marched in all-white Forsyth County, Georgia, to protest the racism that kept blacks out for 75 years. They were promptly attacked by white nationalists hurling rocks and waving Confederate flags. The shocking images sparked national outrage and led Oprah Winfrey to air an episode of her then-5-month-old syndicated talk show from the county.

“What are you afraid that black people are going to do?” Winfrey asked the audience.

“I'm afraid of them coming to Forsyth County,” one white man told her.

Today, Gates said, people can no longer claim ignorance. While it should have been understood that blackface was offensive during the 1980s, one might have had to go to the library to learn exactly why, he said.

“We also have more records digitized,” Gates said. “The access to archives is larger, and we have more diversity in the media so we can say these images are painful ... and why we shouldn't use them.”

Off The Wall

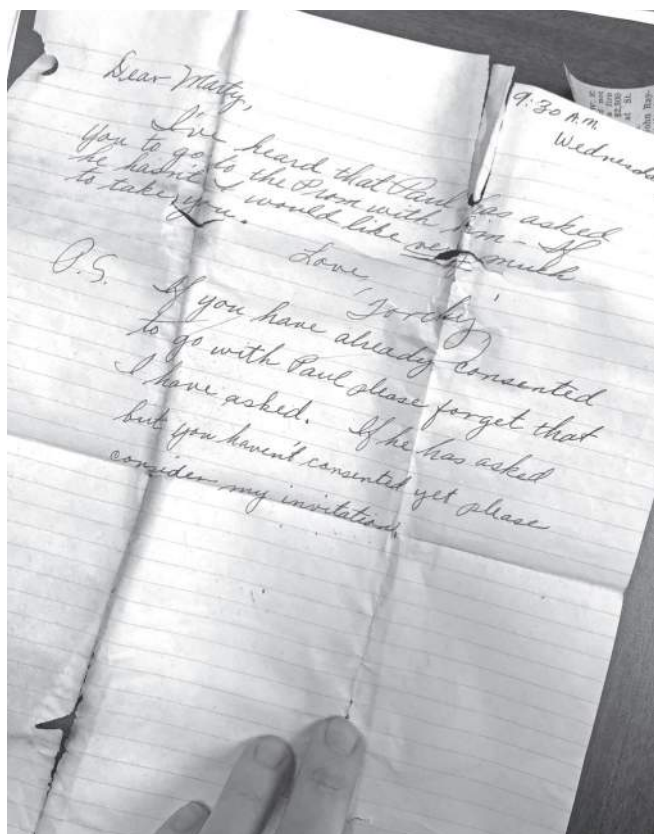
Purse lost in school in '50s to be reunited with owner

JEFFERSONVILLE, Ind. (AP)—A purse containing a prom invitation, photos and other items from 1950s America will be returned to its now 82-year-old owner after workers found it while demolishing part of an Indiana high school.

Martha Everett lost the black stitched purse more than six decades ago. Workers found it in January behind science classroom cabinets in the old Jeffersonville High School, where Everett was a senior in 1955.

Greater Clark County Schools spokeswoman Erin Bojorquez says the district was able to track Everett “thanks to the power of social media” after one of her relatives saw a Facebook post about the purse. The district plans to mail the purse to Everett’s home in Florida.

The News and Tribune reports that its contents included a wallet, a letter inviting her to the prom, lipstick, photos and Juicy Fruit gum wrappers.



This undated photo provided by Greater Clark County Schools in Jeffersonville, Ind., shows a letter requesting a date to prom found inside of a purse of a student who attended the school in the mid 1950s.

AP

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Man who dumped tuna in woods pleads guilty, gets probation

PEABODY, Mass. (AP)—A Massachusetts man authorities say caught a tuna out of season and then dumped the headless, 400-pound carcass in the woods has been placed on probation after pleading guilty to related charges. The Salem News reports that Harold Wentworth, of Gloucester, pleaded guilty on Monday to littering from a vehicle, improper disposal of waste and driving after license suspension. He was sentenced to a year of probation and ordered to pay a \$1,000 fine. During the hearing, Wentworth’s attorney disclosed that federal fisheries regulators have already fined his client \$15,000. The bluefin tuna worth an estimated \$10,000 was found in the woods of Gloucester in October 2017. A tow truck was needed to haul it out of the trees.

Cockroaches named after exes to be fed to Texas zoo animals

EL PASO, Texas (AP)—Not in the Valentine’s Day spirit? A Texas zoo has a cockroach that can help. The El Paso Zoo is running a promotion called “Quit Bug-

ging Me” that allows people to name cockroaches after ex-spouses, former friends or anyone else on the nope list. On Thursday, the cockroaches will be fed to various zoo animals. The zoo’s Facebook page features dozens of pink-heart graphics showing black cockroaches and various first names or initials of people’s exes. Zoo officials say the response has been so overwhelming that they’ve had to cut off the submission period. The zoo’s meerkats exhibit will be decorated with the submitted names on Thursday. And later in the day, cockroaches will be fed to meerkats, tamarins, marmosets and other zoo animals.

Nightmare: Man’s car stolen while he’s asleep in back seat

NEWARK, Del. (AP)—A man’s nap in the back of his car in Delaware turned into a nightmare after the car he was sleeping in was stolen and crashed. Musician Justin Koerner told the News Journal he had spent a night playing music with friends, went to sleep in his vehicle and had a dream involving someone jumping in his front seat. A Newark police statement says someone drove off in the car Sunday morning and

bailed after seeing the man sleeping in the back. Police say the car crashed. Koerner says he awoke and saw car treads on a lawn and a destroyed bush, then realized he hadn’t been dreaming. He says police appeared ready to take him away before another officer said a neighbor had security camera footage of the incident.

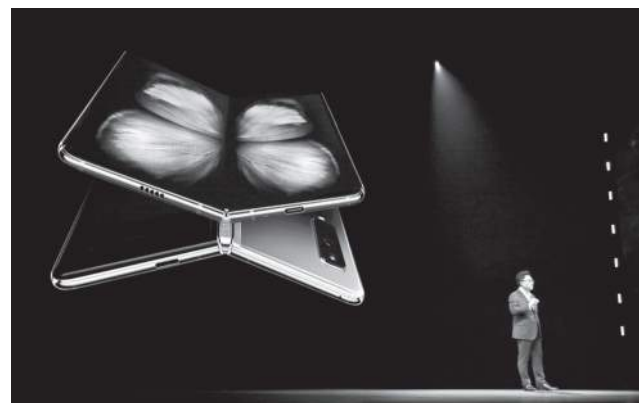
Burglar crashes car into Oklahoma adult novelty store

TULSA, Okla. (AP)—Police in Tulsa, Oklahoma, are searching for a man who crashed his car into the glass doors of an adult novelty shop, then ran inside and stole lingerie and sex toys. Police say the heist at Hustler Hollywood happened at about 3 a.m. Monday, when the store was closed. It was captured on video. Employees discovered the damage later Monday morning when they came to work. Police Officer Jeanne Pierce tells Tulsa TV station KOTV that authorities believe the man knew the store’s layout because he ran directly to one section to steal the items, which were valued at about \$300 to \$400. Pierce says the greater cost is likely the damage to the glass doors. Authorities have not yet identified the man. No arrests have been made.

Science & Technology

Samsung’s nearly \$2K phone

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE and ANICK JESDANUN
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITERS



DJ Koh, Samsung President and CEO of IT and Mobile Communications, talks about the new Samsung Galaxy Fold smartphone during an event Wednesday, Feb. 20, 2019, in San Francisco.

AP

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Samsung unveiled a highly anticipated smartphone with a foldable screen in an attempt to break the innovation funk that has beset the smartphone market.

But it’s far from clear that consumers will embrace a device that retails for almost \$2,000, or that it will provide the creative catalyst the smartphone market needs.

The Galaxy Fold, announced Wednesday in San Francisco, will sell for \$1,980 when it is released April 26.

Consumers willing to pay that hefty price will get a device that can unfold like a wallet. It can work like a traditional smartphone with a 4.6 inch screen or morph into something more like a mini-tablet with a 7.3 inch screen.

When fully unfolded, the device will be able to simultaneously run three different apps on the screen. The Galaxy Fold will also boast six cameras: three in the back, two on the inside and one on the front.

After spending nearly five years developing the technology underlying its foldable-screen phone, Samsung is clearly hoping for a big payoff.

“Get ready for the dawn of a new era,” declared DJ Koh, who oversees Samsung’s smartphone division. The new phone, he said, “answers skeptics who said everything has already been done.”

If Samsung is right, the Galaxy Fold will spur more people to upgrade their phones. Overall smartphones sales peaked in 2017; Samsung saw its smartphone sales fall 8 percent last year, based on estimates from the research firm International Data Corp. Worldwide, smartphone sales dropped 4 percent in 2018, according to IDC.

But most analysts see a limited market for foldable-screen phones, at least in the early going. Phones like the Galaxy Fold “are likely to sell to a very limited market of technology aficionados who like big screens and have big wallets,” said IDC analyst Ramon Llamas.

Although he also believes the Galaxy Fold is more a “status symbol” than mainstream product, Moor Insights & Strategy analyst Patrick Moorhead said the device is symbolically important for Samsung, the top seller

of smartphones in the world. “The Fold was icing on the cake showing that Samsung is the company driving new innovations and excitement to the market,” Moorhead said.

There’s no doubt that the Galaxy Fold is “luxury technology,” conceded Justin Denison, a Samsung senior vice president during an interview. But he also predicted that the advent of foldable screens will unleash new uses for mobile devices. “It’s a technological marvel,” Denison said. “The first time you see a flexible screen, it sort of bends your mind.”

Samsung also released new Galaxy S10 phones that echo the features in other recent models. Each device in the S10 lineup boast fancy cameras, sleek screens covering the entire front of the devices and at least 128 gigabytes of storage—important features to consumers shopping for phones.

The new phones are able take wider-angle shots than previous models and can charge other devices, including wireless headphones and smartwatches. A fourth S10 model, due out this spring, will have faster wireless speeds through the emerging 5G cellular network.

But those improvements aren’t a big leap from the smartphones released during the past few years by Samsung, Apple and other top manufacturers.

“These phones are all variations on a theme we have already seen,” Llamas said. “It’s the same song with a slightly different verse.”

With the pace of smartphone innovation seemingly locked in baby steps, consumers are holding on to their existing devices for longer periods than they have in the past. Compounding that reluctance to upgrade is smartphone sticker shock, which the Galaxy Fold seems unlikely to alleviate. Prices for

some existing phones models have soared above \$1,000.

Samsung is offering a slightly smaller S10 model for \$750 in an attempt to make smartphones more affordable, but the higher-end models sell for \$900 and \$1,000. It’s the second time in the past five months that a leading smartphone maker has positioned a \$750 phone as a frugal option. Apple also priced its cheapest new phone, the iPhone XR, released last fall at \$750. Other smartphone makers gaining market share, including China’s Huawei and Xiaomi, make smartphones that sell for \$500 or less, as well as high-end models.

Two of Samsung’s new models, the S10 and the S10 Plus, are largely incremental upgrades of last year’s S9 and S9 Plus, although they are designed differently. They are about the same size as last year’s models, but will have more display space, as Samsung found additional ways to eliminate waste around the edges. As a byproduct, the top right of the display has a circle or oval cut out for the front-facing cameras.

The lowest-priced “essentials” model, the S10e, has most of the same features, but is 5 percent smaller than the S10 in volume. The S10e also lacks curved edges, a signature feature for many Samsung phones.

All three S10 models will come out March 8, with pre-orders starting Thursday.

Samsung trumpeted its 10th anniversary lineup ahead of a major mobile device conference in Barcelona next week. Huawei, which is threatening to overtake Apple as the world’s second biggest seller of smartphones, has promised to use the Spain showcase to preview its own device with a foldable screen and the ability to connect to 5G networks as they become operational during the next few years.

Life & Style

'Empire' actor charged with making false police report

CHICAGO (AP)—"Empire" actor Jussie Smollett was charged Wednesday with making a false police report when he said he was attacked in downtown Chicago by two men who hurled racist and anti-gay slurs and looped a rope around his neck, police said.

Police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said prosecutors charged Smollett with felony disorderly conduct, an offense that could bring one to three years in prison and force the actor to pay for the cost of the investigation into his report of a Jan. 29 beating.

Authorities were trying to get in touch with Smollett's attorneys to "negotiate a reasonable surrender," Guglielmi said. That could involve the actor, who is black and gay, turning himself in to a Chicago police station.

Police did not have a time frame for how long the actor would be given.

"We are trying to be diplomatic and reasonable, and we're hoping he does the same," Guglielmi said.

The charges emerged on the same day that detectives and two brothers who were earlier deemed suspects testified before a grand jury. Smollett's attorneys met with prosecutors and police, but it was unknown what they discussed or whether Smollett attended the meeting.

In a statement, attorneys Todd Pugh and Victor Henderson said Smollett "enjoys the presumption of innocence, particularly when there has been an investigation like this

one where information, both true and false, has been repeatedly leaked."

The announcement of the charges followed a flurry of activity in recent days, including lengthy interviews of the brothers by authorities, a search of their home and their release after police cleared them.

Investigators have not said what the brothers told detectives or what evidence detectives collected. But it became increasingly clear that serious questions had arisen about Smollett's account—something police signaled

Friday when they announced a "significant shift in the trajectory" of the probe after the brothers were freed.

Smollett, who plays a gay character on the hit Fox television show, said he was attacked as he was walking home from a Subway sandwich shop. He said the masked men beat him, made derogatory comments and yelled "This is MAGA country"—an apparent reference to President Donald Trump's



Smollett

campaign slogan, "Make America Great Again"—before fleeing.

Earlier Wednesday, Fox Entertainment and 20th Century Fox Television issued a statement saying Smollett "continues to be a consummate professional on set" and that his character is not being written off the show. The series is shot in Chicago and follows a black family as they navigate the ups and downs of the recording industry.

The studio's statement followed reports that Smollett's role was being slashed amid the police investigation.

Whispers about Smollett's potential role in the attack started with reports that he had not fully cooperated with police and word that detectives in a city bristling with surveillance cameras could not find video of the attack.

Detectives did find and release images of two people they said they wanted to question and last week picked up the brothers at O'Hare Airport as they returned from Nigeria.

Police questioned the men and searched their apartment.

The brothers, who were identified by their attorney as Abimbola "Abel" and Olabinjo "Ola" Osundairo, were held for nearly 48 hours on suspicion of assaulting Smollett.

The day after they were released, police said the men provided information that had "shifted the trajectory of the investigation," and detectives requested another interview with Smollett.

Police said one of the men had appeared on "Empire," and Smollett's attorneys said one of the men is the actor's personal trainer, whom he hired to help get him physically ready for a music video. The actor released his debut album, "Sum of My Music," last year.

Smollett was charged by prosecutors, not the grand jury. The police spokesman said the brothers appeared before the panel to "lock in their testimony."

Speaking outside the courthouse where the grand jury met, the brothers' attorney said the two men testified for about two and a half hours.

"There was a point where this story needed to be told, and they manned up and they said we're going to correct this," Gloria Schmidt said.

She said her clients did not care about a plea deal or immunity. "You don't need immunity when you have the truth," she said.

She also said her clients received money from Smollett, but she did not elaborate.

Brothers in Smollett case are bodybuilders, aspiring actors

CHICAGO (AP)—An attorney representing the brothers at the center of an investigation into the attack reported by Jussie Smollett said Wednesday that her clients "manned up" and testified in front of a grand jury, before prosecutors charged the "Empire" actor with filing a false police report.

Gloria Schmidt spoke to reporters outside a Chicago courthouse where the brothers met with the grand jury, which was collecting evidence in the case. Without providing details, she said the two men accepted money from Smollett and wanted to come clean. She said they weren't motivated by any promises from prosecutors.

"There was never a change of heart," Schmidt said. "There was a point where this story needed to be told,

and they manned up and they said, 'We're gonna correct this.' Plea deal, immunity, all of that—they don't care about that."

The brothers, identified by Schmidt as Abimbola "Abel" Osundairo and Olabinjo Osundairo, are of Nigerian descent. But they told a reporter at CBS2-Chicago that they were "born and raised in Chicago and are American citizens."

They are bodybuilders who have developed an online following and have dabbled in acting and at least one failed business venture, according to social media posts and news reports.

Abimbola Osundairo, 25, graduated from Lake View High School in Chicago, where he participated in football, track and field, soccer and wrestling, before joining

the football team at Quincy University in western Illinois, according to a football profile on the university's website. Olabinjo Osundairo, 27, also was on the Quincy football team and had attended Latmos Comprehensive College in Lagos, Nigeria, according to his football profile.

The brothers also told a CBS2 reporter in a phone interview that they are not racist, homophobic or anti-Trump, the news station reported.

Smollett, who is black and gay, he was physically attacked by two men who shouted homophobic and racial slurs at him before beating him up and throwing some kind of chemical on him the early morning of Jan. 29. He also said his attackers shouted, "This is MAGA country," an apparent reference to President Don-

ald Trump's campaign slogan, "Make America Great Again," and looped a rope around his neck.

Chicago police said they'd reviewed video of Smollett walking downtown but found nothing showing an attack. They released images of two people, later identified as the brothers, who they called "persons of interest" in the case because they were in the area at the time.

The Osundairios were arrested in the case Feb. 13 at O'Hare International Airport after returning from Nigeria when police learned at least one of them worked on "Empire." Police said they left for Nigeria on the day of the attack. But they were released after two days, when police said the "investigation had shifted" following interviews with the brothers.

Sister suspects fiance caught flirting has much more to hide

DEAR ABBY: My youngest sister started dating a man and they quickly moved in together. Six months into their relationship she got pregnant and they got engaged. Their wedding is planned for this summer.

Recently she discovered he has been video-chatting with someone he met online. He admitted to flirting, apologized and promised that was the end of it. I have a strong suspicion that there have been other "situations" my sister is unaware of.

Should I express my concerns to her and suggest postponing the wedding? Or should I keep my gut feelings to myself? I'm afraid she will get married and then find out what's really going on.

BIG SISTER IN MASSACHUSETTS

DEAR BIG SISTER: Be honest with your sister. Although I suspect that your gut feelings are accurate, whether she will believe it is debatable, but at least she will have been warned. If she does decide to stay with him, refrain from any "I told you so's." Recognize that whether she marries her fiance or not, she will forever be linked with him because of the baby.

DEAR ABBY: After my mom passed away, my dad lived alone for three years until his death. During those three years, Mom's family not once made contact with him or me. Dad lived in a very small town. When he would see Mom's sister

and her husband out and about in restaurants and stores, they would ignore him.

After Dad's death, my aunt contacted me asking if she could have a rocking chair that belonged to my mother. I agreed they could have it. To my shock, when my uncle arrived to pick up the chair, he began asking me about my dad's belongings. He wanted to look through Dad's tools and such. After making no attempt to contact Dad while he was alive, now that he's gone, my uncle had the nerve to ask to look through Dad's things?! I politely shut him down.

Since then, my aunt has been bad-mouthing me all over town, telling everyone "I dropped them" and "don't want anything to do with them." I suppose that's true under the circumstances, but what should I say to set the record straight without appearing as the bad guy?

"ORPHAN" IN THE SOUTH

DEAR ORPHAN: Please accept my sympathy for the loss of your parents, and the uncomfortable situation in which you now find yourself. Memorize the first paragraph of your letter to me and recite it verbatim when the subject of your relationship with your aunt and uncle comes up. Because it's a small town, the message will spread quickly, and you won't have to repeat it often.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I want to go to Europe this summer, but we don't want to take his mother along. We have

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



taken her on two holidays over the last two years and didn't enjoy either one for various reasons. She now expects to go with us on our international vacations, and we don't know how to tell her we prefer to go alone. Please help.

HOLIDAY FOR TWO

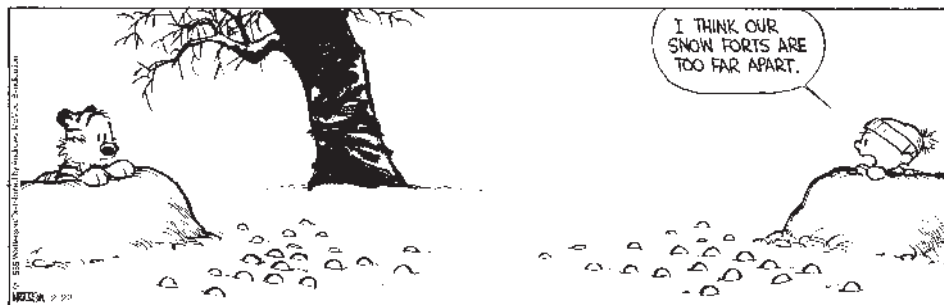
DEAR HOLIDAY: What your husband should say to his mother is, "Mom, my wife and I will be going to _____ for a few weeks in early August. We need an 'adventure' alone together, so we will not be asking you to join us." Period!

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



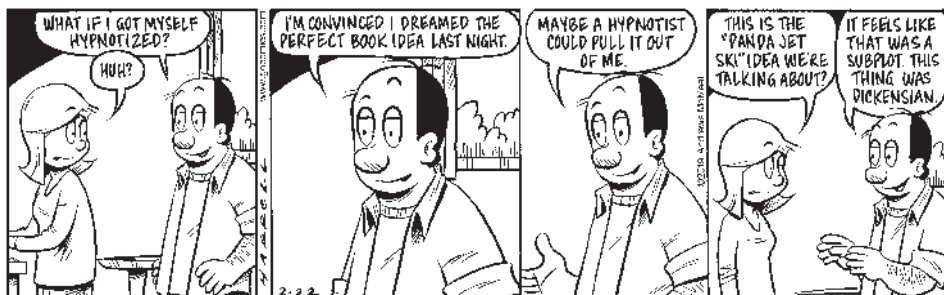
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



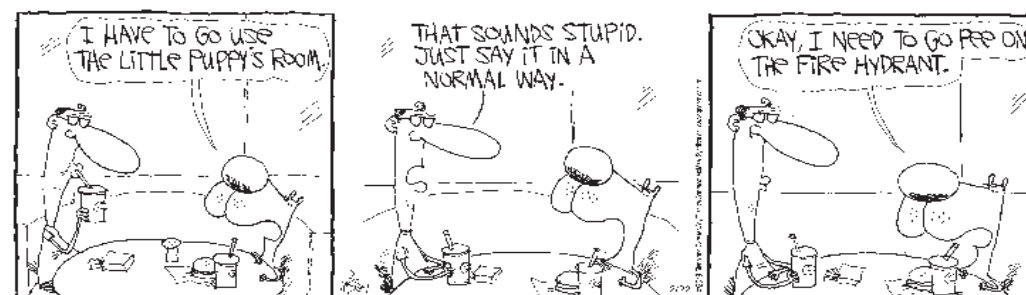
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Up to
4 Platter
8 Scoop holder
12 Olympics chant
13 Sicilian resort
14 Dryer
15 Sandal type
17 Pub
18 Computer whiz
19 Dog tags, e.g.
21 PC key
22 Excellent
26 Expire
29 Present location?
30 Med. plan option
31 Perry's creator
32 — Aviv
33 Hotel worker
34 From — Z
35 "Science Guy" Bill
36 Segments

DOWN

37 Kanye West's music
39 Moon-shine vessel
40 Japanese sash
41 Narcotic
45 Volition
48 Sound of hoofbeats
50 Tom Joad, for one
51 First-rate
52 Onassis nickname
53 Marries
54 A deadly sin
55 Moment

1 DOWN

1 Clump of grass

2 Capri, e.g.

3 Secular

4 Sully

5 Cove

6 — Cat

7 Domed building in Washington, D.C.

8 Purse fastener

9 Tin Man's need

10 SSW

11 UFO crew

16 Stage

20 Ten, in Dijon

23 "— she blows!"

24 Skip

25 Spacecraft compartments

26 Wife of Jacob

27 Intro

28 Fall into

a soft chair

29 Spell-down

32 Not out of the ordinary

33 Wizardry

35 San Francisco's — Hill

36 Thing on a string

38 Bagel features

39 Unites

42 Regretably

43 Rent

44 Grand tale

45 Dazzle

46 White House nickname

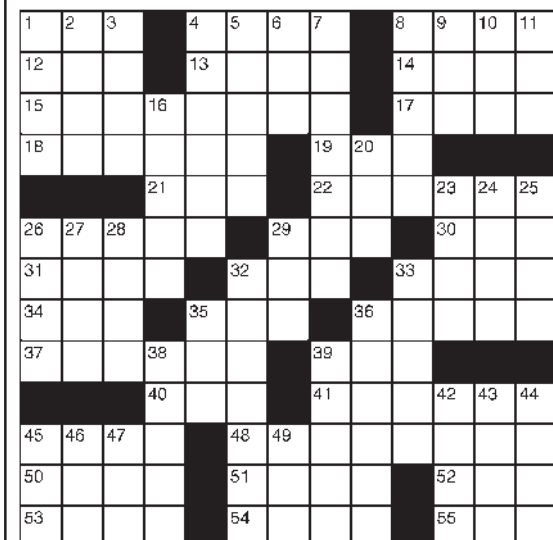
47 Cover

49 Baseball's Gehrig

Solution time: 25 mins.

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Yesterday's answer 2-22



STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Drew Barrymore, 44; Thomas Jane, 50; Jeri Ryan, 51; Kyle MacLachlan, 60.

Happy Birthday: Search for opportunities. Put energy and enthusiasm into whatever you do. Turn this into an eventful year because of the actions you take. If something is worth going after, do so wholeheartedly. Don't end up having regrets because you didn't follow through. Life is for living, not sitting back and letting it pass you by. Look, see and do. Your numbers are 9, 15, 22, 27, 30, 34, 42.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): A change may be your desire, but don't leap before you look. Get the lowdown, find out the facts and ward off making a mistake that will take a long time to reverse. Trust in yourself and what you know, not hearsay. ★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Take on a challenge. Your energy and capacity to finish what you start will be hard to beat. Change can be achieved that will make a difference to you and those you help. Romance will improve your personal life. ★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Keep moving forward, and concentrate on what you can achieve. Refuse to let someone distract you or lead you astray. An emotional situation handled with care will help you avoid a costly mistake. Act with love and compassion, regardless of what others do. ★★★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Visit someone you don't get to see very often, or reconnect with someone you miss.

Share your thoughts and plans to see who is up for an adventure. It's time to try something new and to revive your dreams. ★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You may feel you need a change, but before you begin, set a budget. Now is not the time to be excessive or to let others take advantage of your generosity. Don't buy into someone's fast-cash scheme. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't let a partner cost you. Surround yourself with people who can pay their own way and contribute to what you are trying to make happen. Put more energy into accomplishing your goals and bringing about positive change. ★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): An emotional change will surface. Don't let anyone interfere with what you feel is the best move you can make. Protect what's yours, and take care of personal documents before it's too late. Focus on health, happiness and peace of mind. ★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Go places that will inspire you. Collaborate with people you find creative and forward-thinking. Expand your mind, take care of your body and follow your intuition when dealing with money matters. Romance will improve your personal life. ★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Listen carefully, then make up your own mind. A problem with someone close should not be left up to you to straighten out. Offer suggestions, but don't offer to pay for someone else's mistake. Evaluate some of your

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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connections. ★★★★★

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Think about what you do. Refuse to let emotions override what you know in your heart is the right thing to do. Focus on making positive lifestyle changes that will ease stress and put an end to unfavorable situations. ★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Someone you least expect will make an innocent comment that will spark your interest and prompt you to make a personal change. An opportunity is good only if you take advantage of it. Step up and do your own thing. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Keep the personal changes you want to make a secret. If you are too open regarding your plans, you will face interference. Emotional matters will surface if you don't stick to the truth or you share personal information. ★★

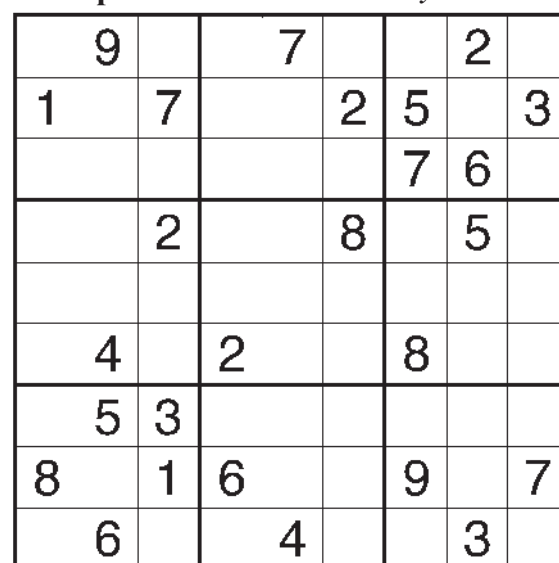
Birthday Baby: You are playful, inspiring and unique. You are flexible and big-hearted.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



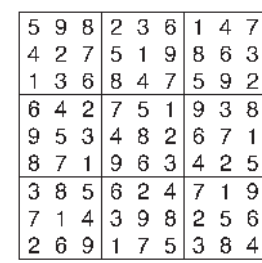
Difficulty Level ★★★★★

2/22

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer



Difficulty Level ★★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

SIMPLY DELICIOUS

Solution: 6 letters

N A P I Z R A M A N G O E S E
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C H O I C E E I P E L P P A A
H L L E M S E I R F R O Y O H
O D O O G S S P U O S C N M S
S O E S E I P D P U T O E S K
D O N U T S G I O T C A C L I
U F I G S E E I H A T L L C I
M A V T A R T T B C M L A E M
P E I A O P E D V O I Z P T G
L S D G M E A E N S Z U E A Y
I P I U W E C L A I R R K S M
N I R S U S H I P Y T S A T M
G C O O K I E S S U O M C E U
S Y R O V A S H E A V E N L Y

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2/22

Apple Pie, Bacon, Cake, Chips, Choice, Cookies, Delish, Divine, Donuts, Dumplings, Eclair, Figs, Fries, Froyo, Fudge, Gelato, Good, Heavenly, Ice Cream, Lasagna, Lobster, Mangoes, Marzipan, Meat, Milkshake, Mousse, Nachos, Pierogi, Pies, Pizza, Salmon, Savory, Scrumptious, Seafood, Smell, Soups, Spicy, Sushi, Sweet, Syrup, Tacos, Tart, Taste, Tasty, Yummy

Yesterday's Answer: Twisting

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WHATZIT Solution:
Majority rule

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- Perform Computer-based Control System

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- Must possess good communication skill

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- Oversee installation, operation, maintenance and repair to ensure equipment are functioning according to specifications
- Install, service and repair of Central Air-Conditioning, Refrigeration and Ventilation Systems
- Repair and service of Chilled Water Air-Conditioning System
- Perform repair and trouble analysis of VAV and VVT Control Systems
- Perform Computer based Control System

Other requirements:

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- Minimum 5-year work experience required
- Must possess good communication skill

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- Knowledgeable of product selection, listing of order and inventory
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- Minimum 5-year work experience required
- Must possess good communication skill

E-mail resume to chongs@pticom.com

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Accountant: Bachelor's degree in Accounting (may be foreign equivalent). Administer all accounting operations based on accounting principles. Assisting management in decisions making process by preparing budgets, financial forecast, and analyzing date to understand where the company is generating and losing revenue. 60 months experience as Accountant. Send resume to: Pacific Saipan Inc. Attn: Human Resources, PMB 351, Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950.

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Steelers won't tag Bell; will explore trade for Brown



PITTSBURGH (AP)— Le'Veon Bell is free to go. Antonio Brown, maybe not so much.

The Pittsburgh Steelers have no plans to place a transition tag on Bell, allowing the star running back to reach the open market when free agency begins next month. And while the team will explore moving Brown, general manager Kevin Colbert stressed Wednesday the Steelers will not cut the talented but turbulent star wide receiver just to appease him.

"By no means are we going to make a trade or any type of move that will not be beneficial to the Pittsburgh Steeler organization," Colbert said. "We will not be discounting (Brown) on the trade market and we certainly will not be releasing (him)."

Brown began openly campaigning for a new team shortly after Pittsburgh finished 9-6-1, upset after being made inactive for the regular season finale against Cincinnati for failing to provide coach Mike Tomlin with an update on his status after Tomlin sent Brown home from practice a couple of days before the game to nurse an injury.

The Steelers won but missed the playoffs. Brown has spent most of the last two months thumbing his nose at the organization via social media in an effort to assure he wouldn't be welcomed back, including calling out quarterback Ben Roethlisberger for having an "owner mentality" and questioning Tomlin's integrity.

Yet Colbert said he doesn't believe Brown's erratic behavior will hurt his trade value and didn't even rule out a chance that Brown returns to Pittsburgh for a 10th season in 2019. Brown met with Colbert, team president Art Rooney II and vice president Omar Khan in Florida on Tuesday to clear the air. Though both sides agreed "looking into a trade would probably be the best course of action," Brown and Rooney posed for a picture afterward, a gesture Colbert called more indicative of Brown's character than the drama that's surrounded him at times during his prolific rise from sixth-round pick to the most productive wide receiver of his generation.

The team has not yet entered into active trade talks for Brown, the only player in NFL history with six straight seasons of at least 100 receptions. That figures to pick up with free agency set to begin on March 13 and Brown due a \$2.5 million roster bonus on March 17.

"He believes there will be demand and hopefully for our



In this Nov. 26, 2017 file photo, the Pittsburgh Steelers running back Le'Veon Bell (26) carries the ball during the first half of an NFL football game against the Green Bay Packers in Pittsburgh.

traded he would be tied to that deal with his new team.

Colbert allowed Brown could remain in Pittsburgh if the asking price isn't met, and doesn't seem too concerned about Brown's recent antics making it impossible for him to assimilate back into the locker room.

"I've seen players change perspectives from beginning of a game to the end of game to the following week let alone a season to an offseason to a new season," he said. "I don't think any relationship is irreparable."

At least when it comes to Brown. Mending fences with Bell isn't a priority because there aren't any to fix. Rather than engage in another standoff with Bell—who sat out all of 2018 after declining to sign his one-year, \$14.4 million franchise tender—the Steelers will let him go via free agency.

Pittsburgh had the option of placing the transition tag on Bell, but the machinations involved and the money and time it would tie up during the early days of free agency proved prohibitive. Colbert said the team would rather use in other areas the salary cap space created by not tagging Bell. The Steelers appear set at running back with James Conner and Jaylen Samuels but could need help at wide receiver if Brown is traded. Inside linebacker and defensive back are both filled with question marks after a 2-4 slide to end the regular season.

"Le'Veon is still a great player but we can't afford to use any type of tag with other needs that we have," Colbert said.

The team does plan to bring back kicker Chris Boswell, who converted just 13 of 20 field goals in 2018 after being a Pro Bowler in 2017. Boswell is expected to face competition in training camp. The team also plans to work on a contract extension for the 36-year-old Roethlisberger, though Colbert also wants some of Roethlisberger's veteran teammates to take on more ownership of the club's performance.

"I honestly believe (leadership) can be a burden on Roethlisberger than he may like to admit, Colbert said. "He's got 52 kids under him, honestly, and I want them to step up and say, 'Hey Ben, what do I have to do?'"

situation there's a demand that can satisfy anybody," Colbert said.

What "satisfy" means is up to the Steelers and not Brown, who along with agent Drew Rosenhaus will be kept in the loop but will not be given

freedom to go seek their own deal. Colbert declined to get into specifics on what the team is looking for, pointing out it could be a draft pick or an established player or perhaps some combination. The Dallas Cowboys gave the Oakland

Raiders a 2019 first-round pick for Amari Cooper last fall. Pittsburgh even snagged a third-rounder from the Raiders last spring for Martavis Bryant.

Neither Cooper nor Bryant has anywhere near Brown's

resume, but they also don't have his contract. Brown, who turns 31 in July, has three years left on the \$68 million extension he signed in the spring of 2017. Though he's cryptically mentioned "new demands" in various social media posts, if

Breaking down FCS prospects heading to NFL Combine

At the meat market known as the NFL Scouting Combine, where 338 players will be on display in Indianapolis beginning next week, it's not easy for a player to stand out.

It's especially the case for an FCS-level player, who presumably has to do more to catch up with the FBS prospects.

This year, only 14 FCS players were invited to the Combine, down 30 percent from 20 a year ago.

From Feb. 26-March 4 at Lucas Oil Stadium, all 32 NFL teams will take an up-close-and-personal look at the prospects as they go through measurements and medical examinations, psychological testing, interviews and on-field workouts.

Here's a breakdown of some of the interesting FCS story lines:

MOST INTRIGUING

Nasir Adderley, FS, Delaware: The explosive, physical Adderley appears set to solidify being the top FCS draft choice, if not a first-rounder.

MOST TO PROVE

Emmanuel Butler, WR, Northern Arizona: In the Big Sky, Butler has lived in the shadow of Doss and Cooper Kupp. He has to flash explo-

siveness during drills.

Darryl Johnson Jr., DE, North Carolina A&T - An early entry prospect, the good-sized Johnson (6-5) seeks to give the MEAC power a draft selection for the third straight year.

Khalen Saunders, DT, Western Illinois: His conditioning and motor have been questioned, but his Senior Bowl week built a lot of momentum heading toward the draft.

Alex Wesley, WR, Northern Colorado: It's a deep year for wide receivers, so Wesley's championship track speed stands out. But is he undersized (6-0, 190) for the rigors ahead?

GLARING SNUBS

Drew Forbes, OT, Southeast Missouri: This is the most surprising omission from the FCS level. His size, skill set and durability command mid-round attention.

Jimmy Moreland, CB, James Madison: The 5-11, 175-pound size—not the productivity—has been the concern.

Donald Parham, TE, Stetson: A Senior Bowl injury prevented a potential coming-out party. It's not occurring in Indianapolis.

Derick Roberson, DE, Sam Houston State: Combine invite requests can be made too early by NFL teams. Perhaps the huge senior season was too little, too late for creating buzz.

THE FULL LIST

Quarterbacks: Easton Stick, North Dakota State. Wide receiver: Emmanuel Butler, Northern Arizona; Keelan Doss, UC Davis; Jazz Ferguson, Northwestern State; Alex Wesley, Northern Colorado. Offensive guards: Joshua Miles, Morgan State; Iosua Opeti, Weber State. Offensive tackle: Ethan Greenidge, Villanova; Tytus Howard, Alabama State; Oli Udoh, Elon. Defensive end: Darryl Johnson Jr., North Carolina A&T. Defensive tackle: Khalel Saunders, Western Illinois. Cornerback: Jordan Brown, South Dakota State. Free safety: Nasir Adderley, Delaware

Harper reportedly turned down multiple \$300M offers



WASHINGTON—With the sights

shifted solely to Bryce Harper now that Manny Machado has signed his \$300 million deal, it's looking like Harper's camp is trying to blow \$300 million out of the water.

According to Jon Heyman of Fancred Sports, the Harper market has been busier lately than you might expect. Heyman reports that Harper has "turned down multiple offers over \$300M" in recent weeks. Heyman also says the Giants may be more interested in a long-term deal than has been previously reported.

The games are still going on. While the Harper sweepstakes should be winding down, it's certainly not looking like he saw Machado's deal and was inclined to sign right away.

These recent rumors make it

sound like anybody could still have Bryce, and that's probably the point.

Keep in mind that any information that's getting reported is information that someone has a motive to leak. In this case, it sure seems like Harper's camp is trying to whip up one last bit of excitement before picking a team, trying to entice those suitors to raise their offers one last time. If it can drive up that final contract figure, then mission accomplished.

Meanwhile, in Detroit, free agent Josh Harrison has agreed to a one-year deal with the Detroit Tigers, according to a person familiar with the negotiations.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity Wednesday because the deal was still subject to a successful physical.

The 31-year-old Harrison spent his first eight major



league seasons with the Pittsburgh Pirates. He's played

second base, third base, shortstop and in the outfield.

Harrison did not have a great 2018 at the plate, hitting

Washington Nationals' Bryce Harper (34) gets ready to bat during the eighth inning of a baseball game against the Toronto Blue Jays in Toronto on Saturday, June 16, 2018.

.250 with eight home runs and 37 RBIs. He missed time early in the season with a hand injury and ended up playing just 97 games.

The Tigers could end up replicating Pittsburgh's up-the-middle-combination of Harrison and shortstop Jordy Mercer, who signed with Detroit earlier in the offseason.

Harrison hit a career-high 16 home runs in 2017, and he batted .315 in 2014, but he's never played more than 143 games in a season. If he plays well for Detroit, the rebuilding Tigers may be able to trade him for a prospect or two.

PEORIA, Ariz. (AP)—As workouts began to wind down, word began spreading across the San Diego Padres' practice fields at Peoria Sports Complex.

The Padres, a team stuck in a 12-year playoff-less rut, were on the verge of making their biggest free agent splash ever.

Manny Machado, the big-hitting, slick-fielding infielder, was going to be paid \$300 million to play for the Padres for the next decade.

The news Tuesday put noticeable pep in the players' step for the remainder of the workouts.

"There was definitely a buzz yesterday in the practice," first baseman Eric Hosmer said Wednesday. "Toward the last couple drills, the rumors were getting a little more true that Manny was likely coming here. The buzz is here and everyone is

Padres buzzing over impending arrival of Machado

excited."

The buzz continued Wednesday as the Padres waited for the deal to finalize and Machado to arrive in the desert, which could come as early as Friday.

The Padres agreed with Machado on a \$300 million, 10-year deal, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press on Tuesday. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the agreement was subject to a successful physical and had not been announced.

The second-largest deal in baseball history signified a significant shift in direction for the Padres.

San Diego lost 96 games last year and hasn't had a winning season since 2010. This

season looked like it would be another in what seemed like a never ending string of rebuilding seasons.

Machado's deal changes expectations. The goal of winning was no longer something three, four years down the road. The Padres want to win now.

San Diego made a bit of a splash last season, signing first baseman Eric Hosmer to a \$144 million, eight-year deal.

Adding Machado locks down the corners of the Padres' infield at least through the next five years, when Machado can opt out of his contract and become a free agent again.

"What we've talked about is if the right guys are out there, guys we feel are a fit in a long-term plan, we want to

build it as we get going and add the right piece at the right time," Padres general manager A.J. Preller said. "You can wait for some of the young talent we've built up and maybe in three or four years try to get the right guys who are out there at that time, but we feel as a group the pieces that fit short term, long term are out there and that's how you build a club."

The upgrades at the corners, along with the young talent already on the roster, have excited a long-suffering Padres fan base that's never experienced a World Series title nor seen a playoff series victory since the 1998 NLCS win over Atlanta.

Machado gives San Diego one of baseball's best players

still in his prime.

The 26-year-old is a four-time All-Star and two-time Gold Glove winner. He's a career .282 hitter with 175 homers and 513 RBIs in seven big league seasons.

Machado hit .297 and set career bests with 37 homers and 107 RBIs last season with the Orioles and Los Angeles Dodgers.

Even if San Diego's brass couldn't talk about the deal because it wasn't finalized, Padres players couldn't contain their excitement.

"It's going to be very special," said shortstop Fernando Tatis Jr., who is listed as the No. 2 prospect in baseball. "He's an awesome guy, a great player and will be a great teammate."

Machado's addition strengthens San Diego's foundation for the future, particularly in the infield.

Hosmer had an underwhelming first season with the Padres, but two years ago hit .318 with 25 homers and 94 RBIs with the Kansas City Royals.

Tatis, son of a former major league player, is considered San Diego's shortstop of the future, though he has played just 2 1/2 months above A-ball. His major league debut will likely come this season and he could even crack the opening day roster with a stellar spring.

Rookie Luis Urias, who was called up last season, could be the starting shortstop if Tatis opens in Triple-A and the Padres added veteran second baseman Ian Kinsler in the offseason.

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Playoff push starts now with All-Star break ending



MIAMI (AP)—Golden State is still the favorite for a fourth title in five years.

Milwaukee, Toronto, Indiana, Boston, Philadelphia, Oklahoma City and Denver can all go ahead and cancel those mid-April vacation plans if they were foolish enough to have made them in the first place.

For LeBron James and Dwyane Wade, some work awaits.

The All-Star break ends Thursday, with about one-third of the season remaining for most clubs—and that means the playoff push now gets very serious. Nobody has officially clinched a spot yet, though it would take a highly improbable series of events for the current top teams in the Eastern and Western Conferences to miss the postseason.

“Every year is a new challenge, different circumstances,” Golden State guard Stephen Curry said. “We are motivated. We understand what’s at stake.”

James has been to the NBA Finals in each of the last eight seasons, all out of the East—four with Miami, four with Cleveland. His Los Angeles Lakers currently are 10th in the West, three games behind the Clippers for the final playoff berth.

James has been to the playoffs in 13 consecutive seasons.

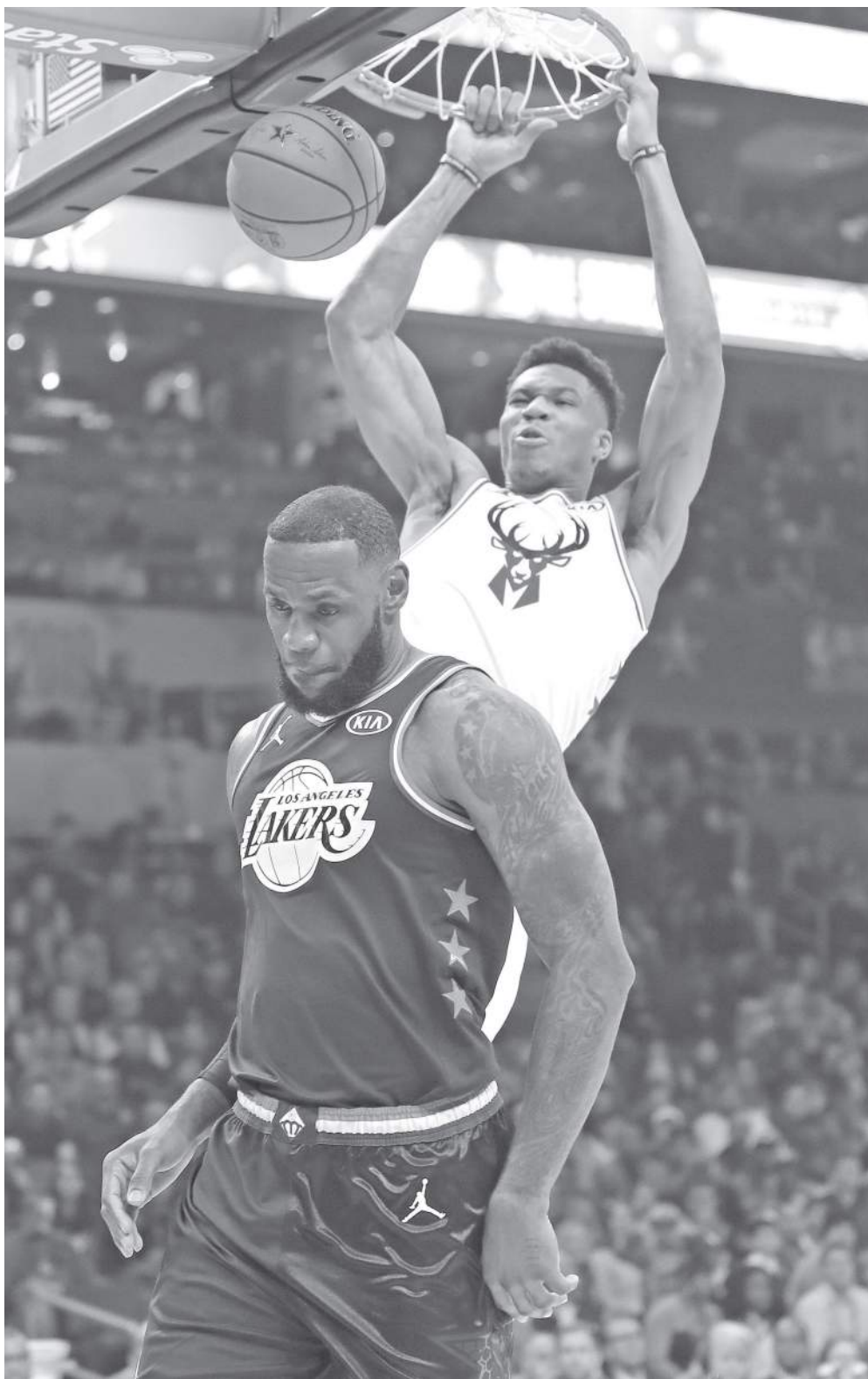
“I hope that first off, we all get healthy,” Lakers President Magic Johnson said. “This has been one of the worst seasons I’ve ever been around Laker basketball as far as injuries are concerned. When we were healthy, we were in fourth place. Now we’re like 10th place. But when you’ve got LeBron James, anything is possible.”

The Miami Heat are part of a six-team, three-spot race in the East, and Wade is hoping for one last postseason trip out of his 16th and final season. Heat President Pat Riley said he thinks the way the Heat ended its pre-All-Star schedule—with a 2-3 road trip, though one where Miami could have won four of the games—is a good sign.

“It looks as though there’s something happening here,” Riley said.

Sacramento is right in the race to end the NBA’s longest current playoff drought; the Kings haven’t been to the postseason since 2006. Phoenix’s drought will hit nine straight seasons, but Orlando—currently holders of the third-longest drought at six seasons—hit the break with a five-game winning streak and is in the East mix.

“I think we feel good about ourselves,” Magic All-Star for-



Team Giannis' Giannis Antetokounmpo of the Milwaukee Bucks dunks against Team LeBron's LeBron James of the Los Angeles Lakers during the first half of an NBA All-Star basketball game, Sunday, Feb. 17, 2019, in Charlotte, N.C.

ward Nikola Vucevic said. “I know we have good confidence.”

Here’s some other things to know going into the final third of the season:

LEBRON AND MICHAEL

LeBron James is finally going to pass Michael Jordan.

In scoring, at least.

While the debate will rage forever about which player is better, James will soon have scored more points than Jordan. James is 211 points shy of passing Jordan (32,292) for the No. 4 spot in NBA history. When he gets there, each of the top four spots on that list will be occupied by current or former Los Angeles Lakers — No. 1 Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (38,392), No. 2 Karl Malone (36,928), No. 3 Kobe Bryant (33,643), and James.

SCORING AND PACE

Unless every team drastically

changes the way it plays over the next two months—which won’t happen—the league will finish this season with its highest scoring average and fastest pace in 30 years.

Teams are averaging 110.7 points and 100 possessions per game this season. That’s the best scoring number since 1984-85 (110.8 points per game) and fastest pace since 1988-89 (100.6 possessions per game).

All 30 teams are on pace to average at least 100 points per game this season. The last time every team in the league averaged 100 was 1986-87, when the NBA had 23 franchises.

3’S ARE WILD

The NBA is on pace to see records in 3-pointers made and 3-pointers attempted. If that sounds like an annual statement, it is: This will be the seventh consecutive season

where both marks fall.

Houston’s James Harden has a shot at the record for 3s in a single season. He has 274 (which would be fifth-best for a season already), putting him on pace for 401 if he plays in all 25 of the Rockets’ remaining games. Golden State’s Stephen Curry holds the mark with 402 makes from deep in 2015-16.

Harden seems like a lock for the 3s-taken record — Curry took 886 in his record-setting year, Harden has 733 now and is on pace for 1,072.

GOOD BUCKS

Already with 43 wins this season, it’s already safe to say this the best year for Milwaukee in a long time.

The Bucks won 44 games last season, and 46 in 2009-10. This will almost certainly be Milwaukee’s first 50-win year since 2000-01 (52-30), and the Bucks could flirt with

their first 60-win year since 1980-81. Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer says he joined Milwaukee at the perfect time.

“The fans there, the energy in our arena, it’s off the

charts,” Budenholzer said. “New practice facility, a roster that’s in a great place, ownership, front office — everything is just really, really set up to have great success.”

Column: Tanking season in full swing for Duke’s Zion

LOS ANGELES—Despite the NBA’s best efforts to discourage it, tanking will be a large part of the rest of this season. So much so that fans, journalists and internet provocateurs have come up with a bunch of names to make “giving up” sound far sexier than it is.

There is the Race for Zion (movie-title dramatic), the Road to Zion (sentimental and biblical) and Dyin’ for Zion (morbid, but factually accurate). Others lazily have christened it Tryin’ for Zion, which is the polar opposite of what is really going on, as a sorry collection of useless teams jockey for a preferred position in the NBA draft lottery.

And with it, the increased possibility of securing a potential franchise-altering game-changer in Duke freshman Zion Williamson.

The 6-7 forward was set to showcase his skills to a national audience in a primetime game at home against rival North Carolina with former President Barack Obama in attendance, but those plans got derailed quickly. Williamson’s sneaker blew apart less than a minute into the game and sent him tumbling to the floor at Cameron Indoor Stadium with a knee injury. The Blue Devils star went to the locker room and was later ruled out for the rest of the game. Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski said after Wednesday’s game that Williamson suffered a “mild knee sprain” but said his knee was “stable.”

“There’s a mindset that if you’re going to be bad, you might as well be really bad,” commissioner Adam Silver said during the All-Star festivities, with more than an implied nod to the awful New York Knicks, floundering their way through an 11-47 run that included an 18-game losing skid.

Silver hates tanking and devotes a considerable portion of his intellect to conceiving ways to combat it. So far, they have proven fruitless. “I believe personally (tanking is) corrosive for those organizations,” Silver added.

Even with fresh regulations aimed at removing the

reality of a poor finish being a ticket to possible lottery gold, there are more bad teams in the NBA than ever.

Thus, the Race for Zion is a four-pronged battle. The Knicks and the Phoenix Suns, with 15 consecutive losses, head (or tail) the field. But the Cleveland Cavaliers and the Chicago Bulls are right there with them. Whenever a combination of those teams meet, as the Cavaliers and Suns do in Cleveland on Thursday, the games take on real significance.

It would be an insult to the players to suggest they are giving anything less than full effort. But the clubs in question have stripped their squads so bare or arranged their playing time in a way that on most nights, defeat virtually is inevitable.

Knicks head coach David Fizdale admitted he is more concerned with development than results, and the blockbuster trade that sent Kristaps Porzingis and Tim Hardaway Jr. to Dallas effectively burned any hope of getting more than a handful of “Ws” between now and October.

Cleveland always was going to suffer the post-LeBron blues. Chicago started miserably and only got worse. Phoenix has some nice young players, but a deeply entrenched losing culture.

All of them would dearly love a prime spot in an enticing draft that sees Williamson as the standout, and also includes his stellar teammate RJ Barrett and an enticing prospect in ultra-talented Murray State point guard Ja Morant.

For the four bottom feeders, all of whom could easily end with a record worse than last season’s last-place 21-win Suns, there apparently is not enough incentive to try to be better. There also has never been less incentive to suck. Yet suck they do, willingly so—can we say deliberately so—at least at an administrative level.

Silver loves his league and almost everything about it but he looks with a tinge of jealousy at European soccer competitions, where relegation is the ultimate punishment for failure.

New country, big excitement in Mexico over Tiger

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Two small openings on both sides of a tree-covered path were packed with fans young and old, some with caps they wanted signed, others holding phones to capture the moment. They were screaming one word that translates in any language at the Mexico Championship.

"Tiger!"

Tiger Woods eventually walked by on his way to the range at Chapultepec Golf Club, and the volume got louder.

He is used to receptions like this wherever he goes, particularly since he made a full return to golf last year and ended the season with his 80th career victory. Take him somewhere new, such as Bellerive for the PGA Championship or Innisbrook for the Valspar Championship, and it can feel like a

rock concert.

This World Golf Championship brings another element. This is his first competition in Mexico.

"I'm sure the energy will be up, people will be excited," Woods said Wednesday. "I think yesterday was a closed day, but there was a lot of people out there, a lot of members and a lot of kids that somehow didn't go to school. I'm sure it will be like that the rest of the week, and it will be a lot of fun for all of us."

It certainly will be an experience for Abraham Ancer, who will play with Woods and Bryson DeChambeau the opening two rounds.

The Mexican player with the best world ranking gets into the 72-man field. Ancer, who grew up just south of the Texas border in Reynosa, played last year at No. 260 in the world.



Tiger Woods answers a question at a press conference prior the WGC-Mexico Championship at the Chapultepec Golf Club in Mexico City, Wednesday, Feb. 20, 2019.

than just altitude. You could have an air pressure system that is like sea level coming through here and effectively change it. That's what I mean by that."

He also mentioned the slower decay of spin rate with no air resistance, but suffice to say the ball goes farther this week for everyone.

Ian Poulter was preparing to hit driver on the 316-yard opening hole Wednesday when Dustin Johnson interrupted him.

"Isn't that going to fly over the green?" Johnson said.

Poulter looked up and replied, "I don't carry the ball 370 yards in the air."

Johnson played the front nine with Woods, and they were joined by defending champion Phil Mickelson and Jon Rahm. It was the final day of practice, and yet the right side of the fairway looked like Sunday at Chapultepec last year. That's the Tiger effect.

Mexico is the 21st country where Woods has competed, so he is used to the reaction

from those seeing him for the first time.

Golf is still in its relative infancy in Mexico, though the appeal changes when one of the most recognizable athletes in the world is in town. Security has increased this year, most of that because of Woods.

Grupo Salinas took over sponsorship of this WGC in the summer of 2016, when Woods was recovering from

two back surgeries. There was no guarantee if his game would get back, so news of his decision to play last week was massive for small sector of golf fans in Mexico.

"Tiger definitely moves the needle," said Benjamin Salinas, the CEO of TV Azteca and lead voice for Grupo Salinas at the Mexico Championship. "When he announced he was coming, ticket sales leaped tenfold. He moves Mexico."

Salinas announced two more chapters of The First Tee in Cancun and Puerto Vallarta, bringing the total to five chapters with the goal of one in every state. He said 100 boys and girls are involved, so it's a slow start. Next on his list of priorities is building public facilities, which at some point would require government help in a country that worships soccer, baseball and the NFL.

MHS 1

From Page 32

"All the teams that participated (in pool play) will earn the higher seeds in the tournament (playoffs) scheduled for March 9. We are still allowing additional teams to enter the tournament and really hopeful that we can get additional girls teams," PSS Athletic Department director Nick Gross said.

Rota and Tinian schools were also invited to the tournament, which had its playoffs originally scheduled for March 2, but was moved to March 9 to give way to other events.

PSS is supposed to have the playoff round of its middle

school grass volleyball tournament (playoffs) and 4x4 co-ed elementary basketball (pool play) this Saturday, but the two events were postponed and rescheduled to March 2 after Saipan was placed under a typhoon watch.

"Due to the uncertainty associated with the storm forming in the south-east of the Marianas, I have elected to postpone the scheduled 4x4 co-ed basketball tournament this weekend and the middle school 4x4 grass volleyball championships," Gross said.

The championship round in the elementary basketball tournament will be played on March 9, too, at the Kobler-Ville Gymnasium.

KNIGHTS

From Page 32

the score is, that's all that matters," Ong said. "We got this [accomplishment] as a team."

Mt. Carmel 1 set up the rout right at the opening quarter, as their stingy defense forced the Torchbearers to have shaky handles, which then led to multiple fastbreak opportunities for Knights guards Chioni Dela Cruz and Keith Santos. Dela Cruz scored 17 points for the second straight game, while Santos added 14 markers. Team captain Angelo Factor had little contribution on offense but led by example in the first quarter with his hustle on the defensive end and playmaking skills.

With the Knights in full control after the first quarter, 25-15, coach Francis San Nicholas queued up his bench mob to take over and they delivered. Aven Evangelista scored 7 of his 9 points in the second canto, while Min Soo Park and Eric Kiser chipped in 5 and 3 markers, respectively, before

the haltime buzzer.

Then in the second half, starting center Michael Johnson had a feast in the paint and scored 11 third-quarter points. Besides tying Dela Cruz's game-high 17 points, Johnson also anchored the Knights' interior defense with timely swats and solid positioning.

With their 2-0 record, Factor attributed much of their team's success in the early stages of the season to an improved training regiment. However, they still have to work on improving their games.

"This year, we practiced way better than last. We got some good players, young ballers—a young generation," Factor, "We still have a lot of time to make improvements."

Meanwhile, four games will be played today, as the high school league continues its preliminary round. In the boys division, MCS 1 will visit Kagman High School, while MCS 2 will host ACS 2. Over at Grace Christian Academy's court, the host's boys team will duel ACS 1, while the girls squads will collide in the 4:30pm tiff.

Now he is at No. 61, knowing he has an outside shot at cracking the top 50 in the world to earn a spot in the Masters.

He said he idolized Woods and playing with him "will be something unforgettable."

If he stands too close to DeChambeau, that might be

unforgettable, too. Mexico City is at roughly 7,800 feet altitude, though that depends on the definition of altitude, for DeChambeau mentioned 9,000 feet.

So is 7,800 feet incorrect? "Maybe," DeChambeau said with a grin. "It's more

Triple J 5K Bubble Color Run/Walk postponed

Triple J understands the public's concerns regarding the development of the storm in our region. Safety is the company's top priority and therefore it decided to postpone this Saturday's Triple J 5K Bubble Color Run/Walk and moved it to March 2.

Show time is at 5am and go time is 6am.

"We would like to thank

the public, event partners, CNMI government agencies, volunteers and supporters of the Annual Triple J Saipan 5K Color Bubble Run raising funds for Commonwealth Cancer Association (CCA) & Make-A-Wish Guam & CNMI Chapter," Triple J said in a

press statement.

"The support and media hype surrounding the event has been amazing, and we look forward to exceeding our target of 1,000 runners. Does this mean registration is extended? Yes and \$10 early bird registration is extended to

March 1."

For registration, visit Hertz Rent-A-Car in Garapan, Triple J Motors on Beach Road, Triple J Truckload Store in Chalan Kanoa, and the Surfrider Resort Hotel behind Great Harvest in Chalan Kanoa.

For more information, call 670-234-1795 or email: marketing@triplejsaipan.com. (PR)

PETERKA

From Page 32

to see what needs to be done to make the most of our national federation," Peterka added.

The NMIVA head, who got her first Sports Administrator of the Year plum in 2012, faced a lot of challenges in running the affairs of the federation for about a decade, but managed to withstand them through the help of the members of the volleyball and business communities and other resources, big or small, made available to their group.

"Sports administration is a career in other parts of the world. There are place to check in and learn about how things work for other NFs (national federations) in other places. I kept running into situations where I needed to learn some-

thing new to be able to run our NF better. In my professional life, I studied business management, and today, I focus almost entirely on non-profit management. Sports administration and non-profit management have a lot in common. Before, I just wanted to see the NF set up to be the example of how an NF could perform in the community. Now, we continue to find ways to improve and expand our reach, and set examples or provide input as much as possible," the Northern Marianas Sports Association board member said.

To help other federations, Peterka is leading a group that NMSA tasked to seek grants that would fund facility improvement projects for various sports groups.

As for NMIVA, Peterka said

they are focusing on improvising venues games after majority of the facilities were damaged by Super Typhoon Yutu and pushing to send a team in Apia, Samoa.

"The biggest challenge we face right now is two parts. First, no indoor facilities for student activities which means improvising and coming up with things like grass volleyball tournaments, and two is being able to have national teams ready and financially able to participate in Samoa in July," Peterka said.

"So for the first one, we are being as supportive as possible to PSS (Public School System) and CCOPSA (Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association) by loaning equipment and provid-

ing referee services for student games. For the second one, we have to check in with the Legislature and the governor about helping our athletes to attend the Games... travel costs are so far out of reach that it is a real threat to being able to have a strong showing," the NMIVA official added.

Peterka also said they are looking to boosting their stock of referees and coaches.

"We are still facing capacity issues with coaches, so we are teaming up with Guam to try to get training and certification. Our referee base is good, but we need to add a little more structure to make it sustainable. We don't have any paid staff to make all of these things happen, so we are challenged to try to organize all of this as volunteers," she said.



Steelers won't tag Bell; will explore trade for Brown

PAGE 28

Saipan Tribune Sports

Playoff push starts now with All-Star break ending

PAGE 30



32 FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2019

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Knights demolish Torchbearers

By ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
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CORRESPONDENT

Mount Carmel School 1 reached the century mark en route to a 100-21 trashing of Agape Christian School 2 in the boys division game in the 2018-2019 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association Varsity Basketball League yesterday at Koblerville Gymnasium.



Matthew Ong scored the basket that pegged the Knights' output at 100 in the final minute of the game. He hit a contested runner in the lane to give MCS 1 a 2-0 record and a share of the lead with Saipan Southern High School. The Mt. Carmel junior ended the game with 14 markers, including 10 in the fourth quarter. Ong served as the Knights' sixth man in their 2-0 start and has excelled in his role, providing their team with a spark off the bench with his scoring abilities.

Duplicating Ong's impressive fourth-quarter game was Matthew Richardson, who scored 10 of his 13 points in the closing frame to help the Knights wallop Agape.

"I didn't really expect us to hit the 100 mark, but as long as we got the win that's all that matters. No matter what

See KNIGHTS on Page 31



ROBY N. PAMINTUAN

Mt. Carmel School 1's Michael Johnson towers above Agape Christian School 2 players for an easy shot during their game in the CCOPSA caging yesterday at the Koblerville Gymnasium.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

High school students play in the 2019 Public School System 3x3 Basketball Tournament last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

MHS 1 and 2, KHS 1 unbeaten

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Marianas High School 1 and 2 and Kagman High School 1 earned perfect records in the pool play matches in the 2019 Public School System 3x3 Basketball Tournament last Saturday at the MHS Gymnasium.

In the girls division, MHS 1 had a 4-0 record after beating MHS 1 and Saipan Southern High School twice. In the boys contest, Kagman 1 and MHS 2 are ahead in their respective groups. The top fin-

ishers in the three pools will get higher seeding when the tournament holds its playoff round on March 9.

Kagman 1 wrapped up its Pool 1 assignments with a 4-0 mark after defeating KHS 3, SSHS 1 and 3 and MHS 1. SSHS 3 was ranked second with its 3-1 slate, followed by MHS 1 (2-2), SSHS 1 (1-3), and KHS 3 (0-4).

In Pool 2, MHS 2 also secured a 4-0 card for the top spot, while Da'Ok placed second with its 3-1 record. MHS 3 (2-2), KHS 2 (1-3), and SSHS 2 (0-4) rounded out the team standings.

See MHS 1 on Page 31

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



After receiving another award, Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association president Laurie Peterka is even more determined to run the federation better in the hopes of encouraging other groups to do the same.

"I have two passions—ocean conservation and community sports," said Peterka, who got her second Sports Administrator of the Year award last Wednesday night during 2018 NMSA Tan Siu Lin Foundation Annual Sports Banquet at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

"I also have a gift for attention to details and I work hard on communications. When I received the award the first time, I didn't know as much

about myself, that I would still be so involved. Now that I've been on the NMIVA board

since its inception in 2004 and then became the board president sometime around

2007/2008, that's a long time

See PETERKA on Page 31



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Laurie Peterka, left, is all smiles after receiving the Sports Administrator of the Year award from Jeff Race during the 2018 NMSA Tan Siu Lin Foundation Annual Sports Banquet held last Wednesday at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.